Choro Paulistano and the Seven-String Guitar: an Ethnographic History

by

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Approved by
Supervising Committee:

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Dedication

To

Dr. Gerard Béhague

Friend and Mentor

Treasure of Knowledge

1937–2005

Acknowledgements

I would like to express utmost gratitude to my family–my wife, Mariah, my brother, Marco, and my parents, Fernando & Karen–for supporting my musical and scholarly pursuits for all of these years. I offer special thanks to José Luiz Herencia and the Instituto Moreira Salles, luthier João Batista, the great chorões Israel and Izaías Bueno de Almeida, Luizinho Sete Cordas, Arnaldinho at Contemporânea Instrumentos Musicais, Sandra at the Music Library of UFRJ, Wilson Sete Cordas, the folks at Ó do Borogodó, and everyone at Praça Benedito Calixto, Sesc Pompéia, Pop's Music, and Cachuera. I am very appreciative of Lúcia for all of her delicious cooking. I am fortunate to have worked with the professors and instructors at the University of Texas-Austin: Dr. Slawek, my advisor, who truly encourages intellectual exploration; Dr. Moore for his candid observations; Dr. Hale for his tireless dedication to teaching; Dr. Mooney, for wonderful research opportunities; Dr. Dell'Antonio for looking out for the interests and needs of students, and for providing valuable insight; Dr. Antokoletz, Dr. Pearsall, and Dr. Heine for hammering Western music notation and history into my head without too much pain. Finally, I send many praises to my friends and colleagues at the University of Texas who made all of this worthwhile and fun; you are too many to name; you know who you are.

May 2006

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2006

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This is a study of *choro* in São Paulo, with a brief ethnography of seven-string guitarists. Studies of choro have routinely favored Rio de Janeiro, the birthplace of choro. This work focuses on São Paulo because it has a rich choro tradition, as well as an active and creative contemporary choro scene that has frequently been overshadowed by Rio de Janeiro's.

There are three main parts to this study. The first part provides background information, including the major guitarists that have contributed to the development of the guitar's role in choro, and brief reviews of the most important literature on the subject of choro. The second part discusses São Paulo, my methodology, and the music scholars that have informed this study. The second part is the analytical base for the study, in which I examine the song, "Sampa" (1978), by Caetano Veloso, and interpret the uses, functions, and concepts of choro, drawing from Alan Merriam. Part II also includes a brief discussion of the resurgence of choro in the 1970s. This work proposes that choro has as its principal functions both musical and social education. The musical education choro provides is aural, notational, historical, and improvisational. The social education choro provides is one of an idealized mythological "racial democracy." The third and final part is a brief ethnography of the contemporary choro scene in São Paulo, with a focus on seven-string guitarists, and a descriptive account for the contextualization of choro.

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Introduction

> The rhythms of this popular music intrigued and fascinated me. There was, in the syncopation, an imperceptible suspension, a lazy breath, a subtle rest, that was very difficult to capture.
>
> (Darius Milhaud, *Notes sans musique*, 1945, my translation)

Choro is a unique and influential music because *chorões* (choro musicians) continue to blur the lines between folk, popular, traditional modern, erudite, classical, "by ear," written, improvisational, and composed musics. Choro is probably the most important Southeastern Brazilian musical practice from the late nineteenth century that is still active and vital in contemporary national and international soundscapes. Choro is consensually recognized as one of the most important forms of Brazilian music.

Choro has played an integral role in the creation of Brazil's Southeastern popular and art music since the 1870s, thirty years before recording technologies were available in Brazil.[1] It has influenced and inspired generations of Brazilian artists, and at the turn of the twentieth to the twenty-first century, choro has become audible in global soundscapes, as well as a subject of study for musicians and scholars of diverse nationalities and cultural backgrounds. While continuing to develop and change through well over a century, choro has maintained clearly identifiable links to the aesthetics and performance practices from its late nineteenth century roots.

[1] According to the popular music historian, Humberto Franceschi, "The general consensus is that the first record made in Brazil was 'Isto É Bom' ('This Is Good'), a *lundu* composed by Xisto Bahia, and performed by Baiano, on Zonophone disk #10,001" in 1902 (my translation of Franceschi, 94).

Most works about choro acknowledge the important influence of Northeastern Brazilian musicians and one guitarist from São Paulo, Garoto, on the emergence and development of choro. However, all works on the topic of choro focus on the marvelous city in Brazil's Southeast, Rio de Janeiro. Rio de Janeiro is usually understood as the cultural and political capital of Brazil from 1763, when the colonial administration of Portuguese America relocated to Rio, until around 1960 when the political capital of Brazil was moved to Brasília. Yet, by 1889, with the end of the Brazilian monarchy, and the establishment of Brazil as a republic, São Paulo had become the economic center of Brazil thanks primarily to its coffee production. As a result, São Paulo became much more populous and diverse. By 1894, São Paulo's economic elite had consolidated national political power with the election of Prudente de Morais as President of the Republic. Currently, Brazil has such a rich and diverse cultural heritage that it would be both impossible and ridiculous to designate any one Brazilian city as the "cultural capital" of the nation. Nonetheless, both São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro remain in the spotlight as cultural references both nationally and internationally.

There are three main reasons this study focuses on choro in São Paulo:[2] a) São Paulo has a long history of choro, a musical style that is central to the city's music tradition; b) there has been relatively less research about choro conducted in São Paulo as compared to Rio de Janeiro; c) São Paulo is the city with which I am most familiar because I was born and raised there.

[2] For more general studies of choro, see Henrique Cazes's *Choro: do Quintal ao Municipal* (1998), André Diniz's *Almanaque do Choro: A história do chorinho, o que ouvir, o que ler, onde curtir* (2003), and Tamara Livingston-Isenhour's & Thomas George Caracas Garcia's *Choro: A Social History of a Brazilian Popular Music* (2005).

The reason most studies of choro focus on Rio de Janeiro is that it is the birthplace of choro, and remains the most important center for choro activity in the world. I am not criticizing the fact that most studies have focused on Rio de Janeiro; after all, this is only natural given its history and contemporary choro scene. Instead, I am merely adding to the available literature on the subject by choosing to examine choro in São Paulo. Further studies could examine choro in Brasília, Salvador, Santos, Recife, Porto Alegre, Belo Horizonte, Austin, New York, Berkeley, Tokyo, or other parts of Brazil and the world.

I have chosen to use the seven-string guitar as a springboard for three reasons. First, many Brazilians view the guitar, despite its Iberian origins, as their national instrument, overlooking, in so doing, other likely candidates such as the *pandeiro*, *cavaquinho*, and *berimbau*. Even though this study does not examine the guitar as a national symbol and focuses on the seven-string guitar (which is still much less common than the six-string), the fact remains that guitarists in Brazil (whether six- or seven-string) are interpreted by many as representing what is most "Brazilian" (whether there is such a thing or not) in any given ensemble. Second, as an amateur guitarist, I gravitated toward guitarists during my fieldwork. Third, and most importantly, the seven-string guitar is the instrument that is most closely identified exclusively with choro. Other instruments that are intimately linked to choro, such as the pandeiro and cavaquinho, are also typically found in *samba* and other genres. While the seven-string guitar is used in Brazilian samba, North American jazz and metal, it is in choro that the seven-string guitar has found its role as an essential component. In North American jazz and metal, the seven-string guitar is typically an electronically amplified instrument. In samba and choro, the

guitars are acoustic. In samba, jazz, and metal, the seven-string guitar is neither required, nor typical. It is from choro that this instrument has become nearly inseparable. The seventh string, essential to the low-end *baixaria*s that the guitar provides, contributes to the fullness of the ensemble's sound. These baixarias are played faster than is usually possible on a bass guitar or upright bass and fill in four or five half-steps (depending on tuning) below the range of a six-string guitar. The seventh string also provides the possibility of lower-end and rapid-paced counterpoint. Improvised and composed counterpoint and baixaria on the seven-string guitar have become hallmarks of any choro performance. While metal, jazz, and samba are often performed without a seven-string guitar, choro is usually performed with a seven-string guitar in a professional concert setting or an informal *roda*. Even when choro is played without a seven-string guitar, six-string guitarists are aware that to have the full sounding ensemble, the seventh string is desirable.

This is not to say that the six-string guitar does not play an important role in the choro ensemble. For a study of the role of the six-string guitar in choro see Chapter III of José Paulo Thamaturgo Becker's Master's report entitled, *O Acompanhamento do Violão de 6 Cordas no Choro, a partir de sua Visão no Conjunto Época de Ouro*[3] for the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, 1996.

This report is divided into three main parts, "The Spring, a history," "The River, a transition," and "The Ocean, an ethnography." The water metaphor serves the purpose of emphasizing that choro is fluid, and in constant change, but is composed of some basic

[3] The title can be translated as "The Accompaniment of the 6 string guitar in Choro, from the perspective of its role in the ensemble *Época de Ouro*."

common elements. The historical section is referred to as a spring, because it is the emphasis on the history of choro that separates it from other styles of performance in Brazil. Chorões inevitably refer to historical figures in discourse, and play old compositions during sets. In this sense, most chorões are aware of the importance of the historical legacy as a source for choro, even if they are not completely familiar with the historical facts themselves. Historical fact and springs also have share the characteristic of mystery in that we cannot know all of the historical figures that have influenced choro, just as we cannot know every drop of water that led to the formation of a spring. The analytical and methodological portion of the work is referred to as a river because it is a link between the historical past and the contemporary present. Granted, this is just my link, and many other possible rivers may flow from different springs. The ethnographic part is referred to as an Ocean because São Paulo is like an ocean of urban life. When flying over it with a bird's eye view from an airplane, there appears to be no end to the cityscape that is São Paulo. It expands in all directions beyond even the horizon, similarly to the ocean. Further, even the choro universe of São Paulo seems infinite, with people of all different backgrounds learning of the genre at an unpredictable pace.

Part I, "The Spring, a history," is divided into three chapters. The first chapter, "Style, Genre, or Performance Practice?" provides a definition of the term choro, as well as a brief discussion of the earliest chorões. Chapter 2, "Sátiro Bilhar to Dino Sete Cordas," explores the development of the role of the guitar in choro from its earliest stages through the end of the twentieth century. Chapter 3, "The Mystery of Choro," examines what I used as the five main book-length publications on choro in my research.

Part II, "The River, a Transition," also includes three chapters. Chapter 4, "Sampa," analyzes the lyrics of Caetano Veloso's song of the same name as a starting point to examine questions of *Paulistano* and Brazilian identity. Chapter 5, "Methodology and Analysis," provides a discussion of relevant ethnomusicological theory and how it has influenced my methodological and analytical approaches, and tackles the recurring theme of resurgence throughout the history of choro as a basis for understanding its present role. Chapter 6, "Transcending Racial Discrimination in Latin America," returns to the question of identity, focusing on the maintenance of Brazil's nationalized "racial democracy" concept, and how this plays out in the *roda de choro*.

Part III, "The Ocean, an Ethnography," has three chapters, as well. Chapter 7, "Guitar Chorões in Sampa, some Musicians," includes brief portrayals of some of São Paulo's seven-string chorões. Chapter 8, "Rodas and Concertos, on Context," provides descriptions of some places where choro can be found in São Paulo at the beginning of the twenty-first century, as well as a discussion of musical context. Chapter 9, "The Water, Conclusions," concludes the study with final thoughts on the functions, concepts and interpretations of choro in the vast and diverse soundscape of São Paulo's music.

PART I: *THE SPRING, a history*

> Choro represents the foundation of our music. To play, to understand, to be, to think Brazilian music, everyone must cross by the concept and the music of choro.
>
> (Egberto Gismonti, http://www.brazil-Brazil.com/musjun98.htm)

In urban Southeast Brazil's musical universe, choro is the bridge between art and popular; the birthplace of the creative process; the core of its language. Many Brazilian musicians consider the choro to be the most important musical expression of the country. While choro had become increasingly popular from the time of its conception in the 1870s through a boom of creativity and performance in the 1940s, it began to take a back seat to other forms of popular music in the 1950s as bossa nova emerged on the national and international mediated music scene. Although choro never recovered its place as the most popular form of music in Brazil, in the 1970s–80s it experienced a resurgence that has kept the music quite alive through the beginnings of the twenty-first century.

Chapter 1: Style, Genre, or Performance Practice? Defining Choro

One of the central issues surrounding the term choro is its etymology (cf. Cazes 1998 and Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia 2005). Scholars are uncertain as to the origins of the term "choro" but offer various theories. David Appleby believes that choro earned its name from the verb *chorar* (to cry), because of its melancholy phrasing. However, this is misleading, because choros are alternately energetic and joyous, such as Pixinguinha's "1 x 0," or full of sorrow, such as Pixinguinha's "Carinhoso." Gerard Béhague suggested that "choro" might have emerged from the Afro-Brazilian dance, *xolo*. According to Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia, "no evidence supports this connection other than orthographic mutation" (60). The most compelling etymological theory for the word comes from Ary Vasconcelos who suggested that choro came from people shortening the term *choromeleiro*. Choromeleiros were musical fraternities that included the wind instrument, *charamela*, during colonial times in both Brazil and the Iberian Peninsula (Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia, 60). "Over time, the term," choromeleiro, "came to designate any musician, regardless of instrument, who played in an ensemble that included charamelas. Eventually, the flute supplanted the charamela as the wind instrument of choice" (Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia, 61). The inclusion of the flute led to the formation of what is now recognized as the traditional choro ensemble.

There are various theories to explain the origins of the term, but in the following chapter, I will focus on what the term actually means and how it is used in contemporary Brazilian culture in reference to music.

Often choro is referred to as *chorinho*. Adding "*inho*" or "*inha*" to most nouns in Portuguese creates the diminutive form of the word. Brazilians often use chorinho and choro interchangeably, but most chorões, scholars, and music critics prefer the term choro because chorinho can be interpreted as derogatory. In some cases, I did observe chorões using the term "chorinho" in reference to their own particular style of playing, but in a self-effacing manner.[4] For the vast majority of cases, in emic settings, the term used was choro, and for this reason, I will discuss the term choro (and not chorinho) in this chapter.

Defining Choro

Dr. Gerard Béhague defined choro as follows:

> A term with various meanings in Brazilian popular music. Generically *choro* denotes urban instrumental ensemble music, often with one group member as a soloist. Specifically it refers to an ensemble of *chorões* (musician serenaders) that developed in Rio de Janeiro around 1870. One of the first known choros was organized by the popular composer and virtuoso flautist Joaquim Antonio da Silva Callado (1848–80). In the mid-19th century the instrumental ensemble generally included flute, clarinet, ophicleide, trombone, a *cavaquinho* (a type of ukulele), guitar and a few percussion instruments (particularly tambourine). The repertory of *choro* ensembles consisted mostly of dances of European origin performed at popular festivities. For the serenades the band accompanied sentimental songs, such as *modinhas*, performed by a solo singer. No special music was composed for the *choros* at that time, but such designations as *polka-choro* and *valsa-choro* indicate the nationalization of European dances in Brazil.
>
> In the 20th century the *choro* or *chorinho* has been closely connected with other popular dances of urban Brazil such as the Maxixe, the *tango Brasileiro* and the Samba. All have the same rhythmic patterns (syncopated binary figures), although tempo and instrumentation are

[4] "False modesty" or "*falsa modéstia*" is a common trait among many chorões, who consistently underestimate their musical ability in conversation.

> distinguishing features. The originality of the *choro* of the 1930s and 1940s, for example those the Velha Guarda band of "Pixinguinha" (Alfredo Rocha Viana), lies in the typical virtuoso improvisation of instrumental variations and the resulting imaginative counterpoint (Béhague, 2004, Grove Music Online, "Choro").

The key to Béhague's definition is in the opening sentence of the passage: choro is a "term with various meanings in Brazilian popular music." The reason for this being that choro is used most frequently to describe an acoustic instrumental performance involving a small ensemble, usually including pandeiro, guitar, cavaquinho, and a soloist, with a common repertory of Brazilian compositions, which can be referred to as *choro standards*. While the compositions that are typically considered to be of the choro genre are in duple meter with syncopated accompaniment, in rondo form, and contain at least one modulation to the dominant and back to the tonic, these structural characteristics are not always employed. Furthermore, a choro ensemble will often perform a popular samba, a traditional waltz, a maxixe, or a choro lacking some of its designated structural "requirements" (such as use of the rondo form), while maintaining a choro feel in the performance. This feel derives from a combination of musical technique with personal musical accent. Usually, the soloist is highly virtuosic, and strives to display sentiment; there is often a contrapuntal second musician who dialogues with the first musician with virtuosity and harmonic understanding; the *pandeirista* mixes a metronomic steadiness with a swung and syncopated *malícia*, without losing the clear sense of downbeat throughout the entire piece; the *cavaquinista* provides syncopated and fast harmonic accompaniment alongside playful malícia; and the guitarists execute rapid-fire baixarias,

counterpoint, and accompaniment, without overpowering the soloist, while filling out the lower-end of the harmonic scheme.

Most chorões and scholars would agree with Béhague's statement that the "repertory of choro ensembles consisted mostly of dances of European origin performed at popular festivities." In other words, it is probable that the term "choro," at its coining, was used much in the same way it is used in contemporary times, that is, in reference to the musicians and their own personal flavors of performance practice, and not to a particular genre of music with specific structural traits. While choro eventually became its own genre in the early twentieth century, and the term can still be used in reference to genre (that is, a form of music with particular musical characteristics), in the latter part of the twentieth century, and into the twenty-first century, the term's main use has been to refer to a style of performance executed by choro musicians. The original choro aesthetic was based on borrowing from European dance styles, such as the polka and waltz and mixing them with early Brazilian rhythms, such as the *maxixe, tango brasileiro, modinha* and *lundu*.[5]

> In sum, Choro was at first a style of playing music. In the 1910s, it became a defined musical form. Choro as a genre usually has three parts (in modern times, two) and is characterized by its necessary modulation. More recently, Choro has again come to mean a way of phrasing, applicable to various types of Brazilian music. Use of the rondo form, has become less strict (Cazes, 21, my translation).

Today chorões emphasize the fact that choro is "a style of playing music," and that the musical structure itself is not as important. It is common to hear popular music

[5] For more on modinha and lundu see Araújo, 1963, and Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia, 2005, Chapter 2.

songs, especially sambas, converted into the choro style of performance. It is also common for choro musicians to accompany *MPB* and samba singers. The main reason for this is probably that samba and choro are both musically and historically very closely related. In fact, Pixinguinha, who is commonly referenced as the main figure, or even the embodiment of choro, is also frequently recognized as one of the early creative geniuses of samba (despite the fact that his instruments–flute, clarinet, and saxophone–are not typically thought of as samba instruments). The basic duple rhythm played by the pandeiro in both samba and choro is frequently the four-stroke pattern referred to as *partido-alto*. Chorões and *sambista*s often use similar syncopated phrasing in the melodic and harmonic instruments. Choro and samba have influenced each other for over a century. Most musicians who play choro also play samba, although the inverse is not necessarily true because the samba universe is so much more populous than that of the chorões. Nonetheless, there are some notable musical differences. In conversation in July 2005 with Izaías de Bueno Almeida, he pointed to the melodic range of choro being much wider than that of samba. He noted that samba is composed to be sung, while choro is composed for musical instruments, thus allowing for a wider range and more freedom in the melody. According to Izaías, more freedom in the melody also allows for slightly more sophisticated harmonies. Nonetheless, while choro does include modulations, most chorões argue that choro harmonies are not complicated, since modulations are usually to the dominant or relative minor.

The extensive range of musical characteristics of the pieces chorões play means that choro should be considered a style of performance, as well as a genre. In addition to

pieces labeled as choros, there are many examples of waltzes, tangos brasileiros, maxixes, and polkas, to name a few of the genres that chorões typically perform. These genres vary in time signature, types of rhythmic cells executed by each instrument, harmonic progression, tempo, and form.

For the purposes of this study, I will examine choro as a performance practice, and use the term choro in reference to a particular style of execution, rather than a genre with specific musical characteristics that can be identified on staff paper. I will analyze choro as the scope of the performance practice that is typically heard when present at an event referred to as a choro event in common Brazilian discourse, such as a concert advertised as such, or an informal roda de choro, where the musicians gather with the intent of performing choro music, which typically includes other genres of music such as waltzes, polkas, sambas and maxixes.

For the sake of clarity, I will point to a few musical characteristics that are typically found in a choro performance. The first is the instrumentation. While there are inevitably many varieties of ensemble formations, at the beginning of the twenty-first century a typical choro group consists of one pandeiro, one cavaquinho, one or two guitars (of which one is usually a seven-string), and one or two soloists, usually flute, clarinet, saxophone, mandolin or harmonica. The second is the dominance of instrumental music over song. The third is the fact that most choro performances tend to prioritize performance of the choro genre of music, which is in duple time, and typically in rondo form, with at least one modulation to a closely related key, although most choro ensembles perform at least one waltz (triple time) and, often, a samba or maxixe (which

do not require a modulation) in the course of a concert or informal roda. The fourth is the baixaria executed on the guitar. While these characteristics are important, it is the overall stylistic approach, including melodic sensitivity, dynamics, timing, and technique that is emphasized by chorões.

Early choro

Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia provide a fairly detailed account for the origins and early development of choro in Chapters 4 and 5 of *Choro: A Social History of a Brazilian Popular Music*. Chapter 4 argues that choro had three main sources, all of which were Afro-Brazilian–*choromeleiro* ensembles, *barbeiro* (barber) ensembles and *fazenda* (plantation) bands. Choromeleiros were musicians who performed on charamelas, and other wind instruments, and eventually in everyday discourse, any instrumental group was referred to by the shortened version of choromeleiro–choro (Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia, 60, from Vasconcelos). "The choromeleiro came to Rio de Janeiro and became a part of its cultural life in the 1830s" (Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia, 61). For the purposes of this study, it is important to note, the "guitar had been a part of the choromeleiro since its introduction to Brazil during colonization" (Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia, 61). The barbeiros were versatile professionals who also worked as musicians, and based their ensembles on the *terno* (trio of guitar, cavaquinho and flute). Fazenda bands were also common, as a demonstration of wealth (Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia, 62–63). According to Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia, all of these groups

were composed almost entirely of Afro-Brazilians and were of seminal importance to the eventual formation of choro.

Most scholars usually include Joaquim Antonio da Silva Callado, Analecto de Medeiros (flautists), Chiquinha Gonzaga, and Ernesto Nazareth (pianists) among the earliest important chorões.[6] This is surprising because while the flute is still common in contemporary choro performances and recordings, the piano makes only infrequent appearances. Nonetheless, these four musician-composers were fundamental in developing the early aesthetic and musical form of choro from which guitarists, mandolinists, saxophonists, clarinetists, and other instrumentalists have drawn inspiration for generations. Of these four earliest sources of choro, I will elaborate only on the flautists.

Various sources agree that the beginnings of choro as a unique musical genre go back to Joaquim Antonio da Silva Callado in 1870 (Béhague, Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia, Pinto, Tinhorão). This is probably because of the weight given to the year as a starting point for Alexandre Gonçalves Pinto's book *O Choro*, published in 1935, and until recently the only book about choro specifically. The most comprehensive published historiography on choro, Henrique Cazes' *Choro: Do Quintal ao Municipal* (1998), points to 1845 as an important date for choro because this was the first time the polka was danced in Brazil (Cazes, 19), and choro would eventually develop from a Brazilian manner of phrasing the polka. While Cazes does not specifically refer to 1870 as the

[6] For more on the specific history of early choro, and these particular artists, see Henrique Cazes (1998, chapters 1–4), Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia (2005, chapters 4 and 5), and Mariza Lira (1978).

conception of choro, he does emphasize Callado's influence on the style of performance that would eventually be referred to as choro. Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia (59) attribute the 1870 date to the formation of the Joaquim Antonio Callado's ensemble, Choro Carioca, based on the common popular music *terno* orchestration (a trio including guitar, cavaquinho and flute). The difference was that Choro Carioca featured two guitars, allowing for baixaria to be executed by one of the guitarists. Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia also report that Callado "was one of the first well-known musicians to play polkas in the new choro style, over which he exerted considerable influence. Not only did he provide the musicians in his group with the harmonic progressions for the pieces they performed, but he also demanded that his guitarist provide a baixaria when they played" (67). This crucial piece of information solidly couches the baixaria as not only an essential element of choro, but also as one of the original elements.

Analecto de Medeiros was the leader and founder of the Banda do Corpo de Bombeiros (Band of the Fireman Corps) (Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia, 70), which was one of the most recorded bands of the beginning of the twentieth century (Franceschi). In contrast to Callado's compositions, which highlighted virtuosity, Medeiros "relied upon straightforward pieces composed for the limited abilities of his band members" (Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia, 59). Medeiros was "one of the first to compose and arrange pieces with formal scoring that would have been unnecessary in the orally transmitted choro of the roda" (Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia, 59). Chordophones such as guitars were seldom used in Medeiros military bands. Although he is understood as one of the creators of choro, when one listens to his military bands, the parallels do not

seem to go much further than the musical structure of the tunes played, because the orchestration and loose malícia of his contemporaries are not audible, as might be expected in a comparatively larger ensemble.

One can note even with these early chorões a pattern emerging of contemporaries' different approaches, and perhaps even rivalries (though frequently indirect and not understood as such). Medeiros and Callado were both flautists, but with dramatically different resources available to them, and with contrasting approaches to their music. The contrast between Chiquinha Gonzaga and Ernesto Nazareth is also noteworthy. Both were pianists, but had extremely different conceptions of how to present their music, using different stylistic devices and even using different terminology to describe similar musical forms.[7] This gives insight to the loose definitions of choro, historically, and the notion that its essence is fluid, like water.

[7] For more on these pianists, see Cazes (Chapter 4) and Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia (Chapter 4, 72-79).

Chapter 2: Sátiro Bilhar to Dino 7 Cordas, a History of Choro Guitar

> Long before the emergence of Choro, and the choro style of playing, the guitar was already a popular instrument that had accumulated significant presence in every type of music outside of the elite classes (Cazes, 47, my translation).

Since the guitar was considered only an accompanist's instrument in the nineteenth century, little is known of the first choro guitarists. Nonetheless, the guitar has been a significant instrument in the creation of Brazilian popular music since colonial times. Afterall, the guitar is of Iberian origin and was imported to South America along with the Portuguese and Spaniards. Antonio Callado's quartet, Choro Carioca (the first choro ensemble in Brazil) formed in 1870, featured two guitars (Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia, 67), but there is no further record of significance about the guitarists in the group beyond Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia's statement that Callado "demanded that his guitarist provide a baixaria when they played," (67) as noted in the previous chapter. While pre-recording era choro guitarists are only seldom referred to by name in the literature, there is no doubt that guitarists played the role of harmonic and contrapuntal accompanists from the beginnings of choro. The importance of the guitar in choro had already solidified by the time Batista Siqueira coined the term "*quarteto ideal*" to describe the four instruments that should comprise every choro group–namely flute, cavaquinho, and two guitars (Cazes, 47). It is obvious that this "ideal quartet" is the same formation that Callado established in 1870 in his ensemble, Choro Carioca.[8]

[8] The pandeiro as an essential instrument in a grupo regional did not develop until the early twentieth century in the hands of João da Bahiana (cf. Cazes, 79–83).

The first recordings of music referred to as choros date to 1907 (Cazes, 19). Cazes has observed that the guitar style of that time, while including the baixarias, did so in a much less exuberant fashion than is done today. In other words, the guitar served primarily as a harmonic accompaniment, and secondarily for contrapuntal embellishment.

Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia define baixaria as follows

> The hallmark feature of choro style is an elaborated, usually improvised, bass line played on the lower strings of the six- or seven-string guitar. In the terno, the guitar is expected to provide both a chordal rhythmic accompaniment and a bass line. The bass line, or *baixaria* (from *baixo*, bass), is created using a number of stylistic resources: filling in the tonic and dominant chords with scalar runs, utilizing a walking bass (i.e., stepwise motion reinforcing the beat), inserting melodic or rhythmic responses to the soloist or cavaquinho player, and improvising contrapuntal melodies, riffs, and pedal points (6).

Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia provide a more detailed explanation for what they refer to as baixaria that does Cazes' (perhaps because Cazes is not a guitarist). Cazes dates the first baixaria to the first choro recording (1907). Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia argued that the first baixarias date "from 1914: the waltz "Falena" by Chiquinha Gonzaga (6). Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia provide a more rigorous definition for what exactly a baixaria is, and this could explain the discrepancy in dates for the first baixarias. While the more elaborate and improvised lines have become the "hallmark" of choro, Cazes, citing to earlier dates, demonstrates that the ingredients for the baixaria were already in place with the first choro recording, and Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia's pin-pointing a later date refers to a more developed and virtuosic form of baixaria.

It was not until great virtuosic guitarists such as Garoto, Canhoto da Paraíba, and Dino Sete Cordas, and the guitar repertoire composed by Heitor Villa-Lobos, that the

guitar earned a place in the spotlight of choro instruments alongside flute, saxophone and mandolin. This chapter briefly discusses the pioneering chorões in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.

I do not purport to cover all of the important choro guitarists since the mid-nineteenth century that have influenced São Paulo's chorões. In fact, missing from the following exposition are Armandinho Neves (1902–1976), Jayme Florence, a.k.a. Meira (1909–1982), Antonio Rago (b. 1916), César Faria (b. 1919), Canhoto da Paraíba (a.k.a. Francisco Soares de Araújo, b. 1928), Antonio D'Áurea (of Conjunto Atlântico), and Raphael Rabello (1962–1995) to name a few. Neither do I wish to imply that those described in further detail below are of more importance than those in the short list above, nor even the many chorões not listed. Instead, I seek simply to provide a trajectory for the reader to follow some of the chronology and major steps in the development of the choro guitar, the seven-string guitar, and how it arrived in São Paulo with the following figures as references.

Pioneers from the Nineteenth Century:
Sátiro Bilhar (1860–1927) and Quincas Laranjeira (1873–1935)

Sátiro Bilhar, originally from the state of Ceará, and Joaquim Francisco dos Santos, a.k.a. Quincas Laranjeira, from the state of Pernambuco, are two of the earliest choro guitarists recognized for their exceptional musical abilities in Rio de Janeiro. While Sátiro Bilhar was an amateur who played essentially only his three compositions with great skill, Quincas Laranjeira was preoccupied with "serious" music, and was a classical music scholar and teacher of the Tarrega method. Quincas Laranjeira was referred to as

the grandfather of the modern guitar in a 1929 edition of the magazine "O Violão" (Cazes, 48).

Note the recurring fluidity and contrast associated with the development of early choro. Callado and Medeiros played two dramatically different roles in the establishment of choro as a form of music; Gonzaga and Nazareth had contrasting ideas about presentation and other concepts; and Bilhar and Laranjeira had distinct pedagogical backgrounds (self-taught and formally schooled, respectively) that influenced their repertoire and style of play. Yet all of these musicians are considered of historic importance to the early development of choro, and each is respected for his and her contributions by present day chorões, who, to varying degrees, accommodate the influences of these pioneers.

João Pernambuco (b. November 2nd, 1883, d. October 16th, 1947) and Catulo da Paixão Cearense (Oct. 8, 1863, d. May 10th, 1946)

João "Pernambuco" Teixeira Guimarães was born in Jatobá, in the quasi-desert inland of the state of Pernambuco. When he moved to Rio de Janeiro in 1904, he brought along a repertoire of "authentic music from the *sertão*[9]" (Cazes, 48, my translation). João Pernambuco was a guitarist-composer, and worked as a public servant. He quickly developed into a sought after accompanist, performing alongside the popular singer, Catulo da Paixão Cearense, and in 1919, as a member of one of the most important Brazilian musical groups of all time, Pixinguinha's "Os Oito Batutas." João

[9] Semi-desert interior wilderness of Brazil.

Pernambuco's compositions for guitar have a substantial following, in large part due to Turíbio Santos, a respected classical guitarist, who continues to perform his work.

When João Pernambuco worked alongside Catulo da Paixão Cearense they dedicated much of their musical production to reviving an older style of Brazilian popular music from the eighteenth century known as modinha. The modinha is an important precursor to choro[10] and excellent studies have been written on the topic (cf. Araújo 1963). Although modinha is a sung genre, its similarities to choro can be seen in the frequent use of rondo form, as well as the use of similar instrumentation: the guitar, cavaquinho, and flute, known as "the terno (trio) *pau e corda*" (Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia, 26). In fact, Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia argue that in contexts in which choro guitarists played accompanying roles, "the only discernible difference between choro and modinha was the vocal part; the harmonic language and musical style were often identical" (27).

Perhaps most interestingly, however, is the attempt by João Pernambuco and Catulo da Paixão Cearense at the dawn of the twentieth century to revive a century old tradition. This search for the authentic through music of the past is another recurring theme found in choro. While Catulo da Paixão Cearense and João Pernambuco were reviving the modinha, both were considered chorões. Other efforts by chorões in connecting with history came along via Heitor Villa-Lobos in the 1920s, Jacob Bittencourt in the 1950s and 1960s, and at the national level through mass mediation in the 1970s, and this pattern of connection to the past persists to this day.

[10] For more on the influence of modinho upon choro, see Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia 22–27.

Tute (1886–1957)

"The first great accompanist in typically choro style was Arthur de Souza Nascimento, also known as Tute" (Cazes, 49, my translation). Tute is recognized as the first to have introduced the seven-string guitar in Brazil. His work firmly established the seven-string guitar in the orchestration that would be frequently used from thereafter. He recorded extensively with legendary choro artists, such as Chiquinha Gonzaga, Luperce Miranda and Pixinguinha, although his name does not appear on most personnel credits (Cazes, 50).

Such was the respect for Tute's skill as a *chorão*, that Dino Sete Cordas (the man who crafted the role of the seven-string guitar into its modern form) did not have a seven-string guitar made for himself until after Tute's death (Cazes, 50).

Violão Clássico (b. March 5th, 1887, d. November 17th, 1959)

Heitor Villa-Lobos is by far Brazil's most famous art-music composer, and is one of the world's leading composers in guitar works. One of his most famous compositions for guitar is Choros No.1, which was published in 1920. Villa-Lobos spent many an evening participating in rodas de choro at the beginning of the twentieth century. "As a *chorão*-guitar player himself, there is no doubt that this firsthand experience represented a true musical education and an aesthetic affinity that remained strong throughout his adulthood" (Béhague, 4, 1994). Choro as a style is perhaps the single most important external source (among an eclectic and even comprehensive variety of influences) for his musical formation, inspiration, innovation, and creativity.

Villa-Lobos played a key role at the São Paulo Week of Modern Art in February of 1922. This event in São Paulo marked not only the centennial of Brazilian Independence, but also the artistic shift in Brazilian literature, art, and music toward a modern and nationalistic movement throughout the entire country. Villa-Lobos was "the music representative," and his significance and ideology can be best understood through José Miguel Wisnik's essay, *O coro dos contrários*, from 1977 (Béhague, 12, 1994). This week was significant because it established artistic, literary, and musical trends for decades to come. Mario de Andrade discussed at length the musical objectives and perspective of the modernist movement in *Ensaio sobre a música brasileira* (1928). It was through his connection to the modernist movement in Brazil that Villa-Lobos originally established not only his position as a nationalist composer, but also choro as a nationalist music.[11]

China

In 1911, Otávio Viana (a.k.a. China) recorded a number of tunes playing guitar alongside his brothers, Léo and Pixinguinha, in an ensemble called Choro Carioca (the same name, but an entirely different group from Callado's original choro quartet), led by Irineu de Almeida (Cabral, 19). Alfredo da Rocha Viana Filho (a.k.a. Pixinguinha) is to date considered by the vast majority of chorões to be the most important creative genius

[11] For an excellent source on Villa-Lobos biographical information, nationalist ideology, and musical language, see Gerard Béhague's *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Search for Brazil's Musical Soul* (1994).

in Brazilian music, both for his unique compositional style and improvisational technique as a soloist and, especially, as a contrapuntal accompanist.

Henrique and Léo, Pixinguinha's older brothers, were both guitarists and were responsible for introducing Pixinguinha to music by teaching him the cavaquinho. In Pixinguinha's own words, "Thank God, I always had a good ear. I would play a C major, a G major, everything taught to me by my brothers" (Cabral, 23).

There are photographs of China with what appears to be a seven-string guitar (cf. Cabral, 33), and it is possible that China was playing the seven-string guitar contemporarily with Tute. If this is ever confirmed, China can be noted alongside Tute as one of the first *sete cordas* (seven-string guitarists) in Brazil. China performed extensively and composed several pieces with Pixinguinha, especially at the beginning of Pixinguinha's career.

The significance of Pixinguinha's contribution to choro and Brazilian music in general cannot be overemphasized. He is credited by most scholars, including Hermano Vianna, with being one of the founding fathers of samba, and is descibed by the Brazilian popular guitar virtuoso Baden Powell as "the composer of the century" (Cabral, 14). Anyone interested in improvisation, choro, early samba, Brazilian composition, and Brazilian popular musics would be wise to learn as much about Pixinguinha as possible. There are some excellent books on the topic including *Pixinguinha: Vida e Obra* (1997) by Sérgio Cabral, and *O Mistério do Samba* (1995 translated to English as *The Mystery of Samba*), in addition to significant sections dedicated to the composer in *Choro: A Social*

History of a Brazilian Popular Music (Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia, 91–98), and *Choro: do Quintal ao Municipal* (Cazes, 53–64, and 71–77).

Unfortunately, little else is published about China beyond his role as a performer and composer alongside Pixinguinha. Basic facts of his life remain a mystery.

Garoto (b. June 28, 1915, d. May 3, 1955)

Aníbal Augusto Sardinha (a.k.a. Garoto) is the most celebrated name associated with the guitar of São Paulo, and is one of the key figures in the development of choro in the first half of the twentieth century. Outside of choro circles, Garoto is most often associated with Carmen Miranda as her accompanist, but he was also a star in her act. In the world of chorões, Garoto is respected as one of the most innovative and virtuosic musical talents of Brazilian music.

Garoto's music education began in São Paulo in 1926, and by 1927 he was already one of the most popular chorões in São Paulo, playing guitar and banjo, as well as singing in the group "Conjunto dos Sócios." In 1930, he "formed a duo with guitarist Aimoré, and the two were inseparable for many years" (Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia, 112).

The following three paragraphs are a paraphrased translation from Cazes (91–92).

In 1936, some famous musicians from Rio de Janeiro, including Sílvio Caldas, Romualdo Peixoto (Nonô), Luís Barbosa and Araci de Almeida, were invited by Radio Record, São Paulo's major radio station, to perform at Teatro Santanna (in São Paulo). At the time, there was a certain disdain for São Paulo musicians on the part of these

musicians from Rio. At first Garoto picked up his Hawaiian guitar, and was interrupted by Sílvio Caldas, telling him he might sound bad playing that instrument. Then he picked up the mandolin, and was interrupted again, "Do you think you're going to sound good on the mandolin? Look, we're from Rio, where Luperce Miranda plays."

Garoto was furious, and he grabbed his tenor guitar, and Aimoré picked up his guitar, and they began to play without accepting further interruptions. The music took hold, and there was nothing else to be said.

São Paulo has frequently been criticized for its "low quality" samba. In fact, in 1960, the bossa nova poet, Vinicius de Moraes, described São Paulo as "the tomb of samba." To this day, São Paulo is criticized for its alleged low quality samba. Thanks to Garoto and other great chorões of São Paulo, the discredit to São Paulo's choro scene disappeared decades ago.

> [Garoto's] choros are notable for their subtle yet effective blending of the rhythmic and melodic aspects of choro with the harmonic sophistication of jazz. In this respect, he prepared the ground for bossa nova, although he did not live long enough to witness its development (Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia, 112).

João Gilberto, the father of the *violão gago* (stuttering guitar) that sparked the bossa nova movement in the 1950s, said "Garoto is extraordinary, his guitar is the heart of Brazil" (Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia, 115). Evidently, Garoto's influence stretched far beyond choro circles.

Garoto's popularity and performances spread throughout southern Brazil and Argentina, and by 1938 he moved to the cradle of choro, Rio de Janeiro, where he worked for Rádio Mayrink, and became acquainted with Carmen Miranda and Laurindo

Almeida. In 1939 Garoto went to New York City as a member of "Bando da Lua," which accompanied Carmen Miranda. He frequently listened to and jammed with American jazz musicians, and caught the attention of Duke Elington, Art Tatum, and others. In 1940, Garoto returned to Rio de Janeiro, where he remained for most of the rest of his life (Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia, 113).

According to Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia,

> As a composer, Garoto revolutionized the choro genre. His pieces exhibit a new harmonic sophistication while retaining many of the rhythmic and melodic characteristics of choro. Garoto's musical palette consisted of a wide variety of styles and genres, including choro and samba, jazz, and classical music, and he blended these influences with a masterful ease [...] Garoto's compositions were unlike that of any choro musician before him. He had a strong influence on musicians of his time, and his style was a clear precursor to the harmonic language and subtlety of bossa nova (114–115).

Garoto's influence as both a composer and performer are persist in contemporary Brazilian popular music. His compositions are perhaps best kept alive by Paulo Bellinati who released an album and two music books recovering Garoto's work from old tapes and manuscripts. Although Garoto was not known as a seven-string guitarist, he was perhaps the most important choro guitarist of São Paulo, and possibly the most important Brazilian choro guitarist. His music extended well beyond not only São Paulo's city limits, but transcended the style of choro itself.

Dino Sete Cordas (b. May 5th, 1918)

Horondino José da Silva is the single most important name associated with the Brazilian seven-string guitar. His nickname can be translated literally to Dino Seven

Strings. Dino is best known for his work with Jacob Bittencourt's professional choro ensemble, "Época de Ouro." Jacob Bittencourt (a.k.a. Jacob do Bandolim) is, alongside Pixinguinha and Waldir Azevedo, the most popular chorão of all time. Jacob was known for his perfectionism, discipline, and strict rehearsals. Época de Ouro's recordings from the 1950s and 1960s, featuring Dino Sete Cordas and Jacob do Bandolim serve as the principal model for choro performance to this day.

It is thanks to Dino Sete Cordas that the seven-string guitar has become an integral instrument to any *regional*. A typical *regional* consists of a pandeiro, a cavaquinho, a soloist, one six-string guitar, and one seven-string guitar. Although the seven-string guitar had come into use at around the time of Dino's birth, it was not until after Tute's death, when Dino took up the seventh string, that the seven-string guitar became an indispensable instrument in choro performance. Every seven-string guitarist in Brazil owes the rich heritage of seven-string virtuosic accompaniment, improvisational technique to Dino Sete Cordas. He is consistently cited in conversation with chorões as the main articulator of the seven-string guitar to date.

For more on Dino Sete Cordas, consult Márcia Taborda's thesis for the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro.

Luiz Otávio Braga (b. March 29th, 1953)

Luiz Otávio Braga is a professor at the department of music education of the Instituto Villa-Lobos of Uni-Rio (Universidade do Rio de Janeiro). He is a seven-string guitarist and music instructor. He was a key figure in the ressurgence of choro in the

1970s, playing in groups such as Galo Preto and Camerata Carioca. As a musician, he has made two indispensable contributions to the development of the Brazilian seven-string guitar. First, he was part of the choro group, Camerata Carioca, which was a sophisticated ensemble of perfectionists, concerned not only with virtuosity and technique, but also sound quality. As a result, in 1979, he developed the first seven-string guitar with nylon strings, making the seven-string guitar more closely related to the classical guitar (Cazes, 170). This innovation has become the norm for most seven-string guitarists in Rio de Janeiro, and has spread to São Paulo as well. Braga developed an instructional method for teaching the seven-string guitar, and had it published in 2002. Both of these contributions are crucial to the position in which the seven-string guitar finds itself today, as a more sophisticated, yet more popular instrument.

Chapter 3: The Mystery of Choro, a Survey of the Literature

Choro is an essential ingredient of Brazil's musical heritage, yet there are only four books written exclusively on the topic. In comparison, there are endless volumes published on the topics of North American jazz and Brazilian samba. Even older Brazilian styles of music, such as modinha and lundu, had received more attention in academic publications than choro until very recently.

The first book on choro was Alexandre Gonçalves Pinto's *O Choro: Reminiscências dos Chorões Antigos*, originally published in 1936. Pinto's monograph was, for about sixty years, the only book about choro, and is still the only work that addresses choro at the turn of the nineteenth to twentieth century specifically. The literature on choro has expanded significantly since Editora 34's publication of Henrique Cazes' *Choro: Do Quintal ao Municipal* in 1998. In 2003, Jorge Zahar Editor published *Almanaque do Choro: A história do chorinho, o que ouvir, o que ler, onde curtir*, by André Diniz, and in 2005, Indiana University Press released the first in-depth book about choro in the English language–*Choro: A Social History of a Brazilian Popular Music*, by Tamara Elena Livingston-Isenhour and Thomas George Caracas Garcia.

Choro is usually at least mentioned in works that discuss the history of samba or Brazilian popular music, and in some cases is given a full chapter or significant section, for example pages 107–125 of *Música Popular: Um Tema em Debate*, by José Ramos Tinhorão (1997), and pages 29–35 of *Music in Brazil* (2006), by John Murphy. In addition to segments in studies of Brazilian music, and the publications cited in the

previous paragraph, there have been a handful of biographies written about specific choro musicians, such as *Pixinguinha: Vida e Obra*, by Sérgio Cabral, *Jacob do Bandolim,* by Ermelinda A. Paz, *Waldir Azevedo: Um Cavaquinho na História*, by Marco Antonio Bernardo, *Chiquinha Gonzaga: Grande Compositora Popular Brasileira*, by Mariza Lira, as well *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Search for Brazil's Musical Soul*, by Gerard Béhague. There are also several master's theses and dissertations by Brazilian scholars such as José Paulo Thaumaturgo Becker, Marcus de Araújo Ferrer, Samuel de Oliveira, Márcia Taborda, Andrea Ernest Dias, Marcelo Verzoni, Sérgio Luiz Jesus, Luiz Otávio Braga, Luiz Felipe de Lima, and Paulo Puterman (Diniz, 88).

What follows are brief overviews of five books. Four of them are included because choro is the main topic of the book. I have also included a discussion of Hermano Vianna's *O Mistério do Samba*, which is a study of the development of samba into a nationally representative music. Some noteworthy absent studies include the biographies mentioned in the previous paragraph, as well as *A História Social da Música Popular Brasileira* (Tinhorão, 1998), *A Casa Edison e Seu Tempo* (Franceschi, 2002), and two articles that discuss Brazilian popular music genres and choro in the journal Ethnomusicology by Béhague (1973) and Livingston (1999), respectively. Although the following books do not by any means cover all of the important literature on the topic of choro, this chapter should provide the reader with an overview of the development of studies in choro.

O Choro: Reminiscências dos Chorões Antigos, Alexandre Gonçalves Pinto, 1936

This book was republished in a facsimile edition in 1978. Pinto provides brief descriptions and anecdotes about various chorões of the pre-1930 era. The book is a "profile of all the chorões of the old guard, and a large number of chorões of today, facts, and customs of the old music parties." As a musical study, the book has little to offer beyond information about who played what instrument. From an anthropological standpoint, Pinto does offer a window into early twentieth century Rio de Janeiro, with descriptions of chorões' personal histories, professions, and character traits.

Perhaps the most salient point to be made about Pinto's work in relation to this particular study is that Pinto wanted to "revive the great musicians who have fallen into obscurity" (Pinto, Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia translation, 42). It is noteworthy that the recurring topic of revival is evident here again, as it was with João Pernambuco's and Catulo da Paixão Cearense's attempts to revive the modinha of the 18th century, at the beginning of the twentieth century; as well as the efforts to revitalize the popularity of choro in by Dino Sete Cordas' and Jacob do Bandolim's ensemble, "Época de Ouro," resisting to the bossa nova movement in the 1960s.[12]

O Mistério do Samba, by Hermano Vianna, 1995

O Mistério do Samba is a historical and theoretical study of the development of samba as *the* national music *par excellence* for all of Brazil, with its birthplace being Rio de Janeiro, yet including influences from various regions and ethnicities. This should be

[12] For more analysis of revival in relation to choro, see Tamara Livingston's

an important source for any study of choro because it discusses the relationship between early twentieth century chorões and samba. It also addresses questions of music and identity, and specifically Brazilian samba as a national symbol.

I have included Vianna's book in the discussion, not only because Pixinguinha, the greatest creative genius of choro, is seen as one of the main pillars of influence upon which rests the emergence of samba, but because Vianna's discussions about identity and nationalism are relevant to choro as well. In fact, *The Mystery of Samba*, is one of the finest social histories on the music of any nation, one of the most significant studies of samba, and an excellent source for the discussion of nationalism, identity, and culture of Brazil.

At the center of the discussion is the figure of Pixinguinha. Pixinguinha is recognized unanimously as the most creative force in the development of choro. Pixinguinha mastered all aspects of choro, including musical form, phrasing style, composition, instrumentation, and contrapuntal technique.

Vianna begins with the premise in Chapter 1 "O Encontro" ("The meeting") that chorões of the early twentieth century were of the underprivileged classes and they had close contact with the intellectuals of the upper middle-classes. Vianna paints a picture of Rio de Janeiro in the 1920s as a place with a similar disparity in distribution of wealth between rich and poor as contemporary Brazil; but a Brazil in which the rich and poor were in much closer contact, sharing both commercial and residential neighborhoods, unlike Brazil in the twenty-first century where the wealthy can have virtually no contact

with the impoverished due to gated communities, armored cars, private security, exclusive businesses, and helicopter transportation.

The meeting to which Vianna refers in Chapter 1 is recorded only in a brief newspaper article and a diary entry by the Brazilian anthropologist Gilberto Freyre. The occasion included intellectuals of the privileged class–Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, one of Brazil's most influential historians to date; Prudente de Moraes Neto, the grandson of former Brazilian president Prudente de Moraes; Heitor Villa-Lobos, the most recognizable Brazilian name in art music; Luciano Gallet, the classical composer and pianist–and the sambistas of the lower classes–Patrício Teixeira, Donga, and Pixinguinha. Donga and Pixinguinha are credited as two of the most important figures in the creation of both samba and choro.

There is no way to communicate the historical significance of the individuals present at this meeting. Nonetheless, I will use a rough analogy. Imagine an informal gathering including anthropologist Margaret Mead, historian Charles Beard, composer Aaron Copland, jazz artists Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington, among a few others. A meeting of this sort in the United States, with such recognizable names from different intellectual fields, economic and racial classes, and geographic origins is almost unfathomable. Further, had any such meeting taken place in the United States or Europe, chances are it would not have taken nearly seventy years for a scholar to take notice and write about it.

This meeting in century-old independent Brazil was possible because Rio de Janeiro was an exceptionally special and centralized city in 1926. At that time, Rio de

Janeiro was the economic, historical, intellectual, cultural and political capital of the nation. By 1926, the United States already had several different "capitals," including Washington D.C., Philadelphia, New Orleans, Detroit, Boston, and San Francisco, to name just a few.

Vianna comments on this important meeting in 1926 in Rio de Janeiro, that went virtually unnoticed until the publication of *O Mistério do Samba* in 1995:

> That "night of guitar music" could serve as an allegory, in the carnivalesque meaning of that word of the "invention of a tradition": the traditional use of samba to represent and define Brazil's cultural and racial "hybridity." Too much should not be made, perhaps, of the naturalness of the episode. Its seeming triviality is obviously constructed. It has the feel of foundational myth. Still, the fact that the gathering was not transformed into myth, nor remembered as something extraordinary by the participants or their biographers, shows that they regarded the even as an everyday occurrence, unworthy of a more careful record (2).

Vianna uses this meeting as a springboard to discuss the development of samba, but especially for a discussion of Brazilian race relations and national identity. Vianna discusses Freyre's valorization of black Brazilians, which was unique in a time where the general concept of progress in Brazil was based on a theory of "whitening" the population into civility[13]. The valorization of black Brazilians generated much controversy, but, ultimately, the undeniable creative influence of Afro-Brazilians on the music of Brazil became a virtue to be honored and upheld in Brazilian culture on a massive scale, sparked by modernist intellectuals such as Mário de Andrade, Gilberto Freyre, and Heitor Villa-Lobos, and represented musically by samba, with choro as one of samba's essential direct precedents.

[13] Further commentary on race relations in Brazil can be found in Chapter 6, "Transcending Racial Discrimination."

Choro: do Quintal ao Municipal, by Henrique Cazes, 1998

The title can be translated as "Choro: from the backyard to the Municipal Theatre." This is the most important historiography of choro to date. Cazes basically writes a chronological history of choro with some important focal points involving instruments, personalities and language. This is the main historical reference for my report because it is comprehensive and includes discussions of practically all of the important aspects and people that are and have been important in choro since its beginnings towards then end of the eighteenth century. The book also includes a fabulous discography at the end.

Cazes writes from an emic perspective. As a distinguished chorão, with many recordings and performances himself, he is at home in the choro scene of Rio de Janeiro and knowledgeable of the development of choro since its beginnings. Cazes shares some insightful anecdotes about chorões and is not hesitant to opine on controversial matters such as the role gender plays in the roda.

Cazes admits (as an insider), "Even today the relations between most women (wives of chorões or not) and the roda of choro are not very good" (114). Since I am relatively new to the choro universe, I do not proclaim to know as much about gender relations in the roda as Cazes does; however, I do think some of his declarations are both insensitive and irresponsible, although perhaps well-intentioned. Cazes criticizes women who go straight to the kitchen upon arrival at a domestic roda. He states his disdain for women who sleep for hours on the couch, sometimes even snoring, while chorões are playing, and once awake again, like to express their profound respect for the musicians

and their music. He also complains of wives who cheer on their husbands in the roda and enjoy voicing opinions that, sooner or later, make clear their profound ignorance of choro. Cazes warns of the danger of women who sing or shake empty beer cans and threaten to transform the roda into a *pagode* jam session of questionable taste. Cazes even criticizes women scholars who go to rodas de choro when they do not follow up on their initial interest, and never listen to choro again (Cazes, 114–115).

It is possible that Cazes's apparently sexist stance is ultimately well-intentioned. After all, his initial critique is not directed at women, but at the fact that rodas de choro have become infamously known as open almost exclusively to men. He closes his tirade against female *faux pas* in the roda with a fairly neutral statement, observing that lately more women have been welcomed into the roda. He follows this neutral statement with a compliment to the cooking abilities of the wife of one of his chorão friends, Álvaro Carrilho. In a superficial reading, it would appear that Cazes is arguing that women are good for choro as long as they are in the kitchen and keep their mouths shut. However, Cazes implies that he advocates a more gender neutral roda de choro, and it seems that he might be challenging women to become more active in rodas de choro. His respect for "true" *choronas* (women chorões) is evident in his critique of the gender exclusive nature of the roda, and the importance he gives to Chiquinha Gonzaga in the earlier chapters of his book. This may be an optimistic read of Cazes's tirade, but in my fieldwork, it was clear that women were not only participating in rodas, but they also were treated with respect and encouraged in their musicality. In my fieldwork, I found that in São Paulo

there are several all-female groups that are being well received throughout the city, as well as at informal male-dominated rodas.

My final critique of Cazes's book is directed not only at Cazes, but at dozens of Brazilian writers who continue to write valuable historiographies and insightful studies with scholarly ambition, but do not include two items usually found at the end of an academic work 1) a general index, and 2) a bibliography. I do not know if the authors, editors, or publishers are to blame for this shortcoming, but as a researcher, I find the exclusion of these useful items to be a great hindrance.

Cazes, similarly to Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia, discusses a resurgence of choro in the 1970s (although Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia use the term revival), which will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Almanaque do Choro, by André Diniz, 2003

This work aspires to be simply

> an introduction to the universe of choro, with texts about the instruments, iconography covering more than a century, basic discography and bibliography, chronology, addresses of stores and bookstores, in addition to some videos and locations to hear the genre (Diniz, 11, my translation).

This is a brief book that covers the basics of choro in a fairly elementary style. Diniz covers five eras of choro: 1) its beginnings in Rio, 2) Pixinguinha, 3) the radio days, 4) choro popularization in the seventies, 5) contemporary choro. There is also a chapter about sung choro. This book was extremely useful for finding out where to go hear choro in São Paulo city. Although some of the sites have become obsolete or

inactive, most of the sites mentioned were active in featuring chorões. This is an excellent introductory source for the field, despite its frequent oversimplifications.

Diniz also discusses the role of choro in the 1970s, not as a resurgence (Cazes) or revival (Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia), but as a popularization. This demonstrates a general consensus that choro was on the rise in the 1970s, although each author describes this ascension in different terms.

Choro: A Social History of a Brazilian Popular Music,
by Tamara Elena Livingston-Isenhour and Thomas George Caracas Garcia, 2005

This is the first book in the English language about choro, and just the fourth published book about the nearly century-and-a-half year old Brazilian musical performance practice. Livingston-Isenhour also has an article published in the journal *Ethnomusicology* about music revivals, in which she discusses choro extensively (1999). Both authors are guitarists with thorough knowledge of Villa-Lobos's guitar compositions, the music that originally attracted them to the topic of choro in the first place. Garcia explains that he "decided to focus [his] work in Rio de Janeiro, the cultural capital of Brazil and the place of origin of choro" (xi). While Rio de Janeiro is indisputably the birthplace of choro and an important cultural reference point for the nation, other cities are strong candidates for cultural capitals of Brazil as well, including Salvador, Recife, and São Paulo.

The authors are ambitious, yet successful, in their endeavor to explain choro to a non-Brazilian audience. They approach choro from various angles. Chapter 1, the introduction, defines choro as a genre and performance practice describing musical

characteristics, such as orchestration, melody, harmony, rhythm, form and style. Chapter 2 provides an historical account–both musical and social–leading up to the development of choro. The authors examine the role of race and class in nineteenth century Brazil and their impact on music and identity. Chapter 3 explains the roda, the main context for choro performance, by discussing its roles throughout history as well as its ethos. Chapter 4 describes the early history of choro in Rio de Janeiro, including a discussion of the etymology of the word "choro," theories about the Afro-Brazilian influence on the style from its very earliest stages, and the most important early chorões. Chapter 5 examines the professionalization of choro, and its identification with modernism and nationalism in the 1920s, 30s, and 40s. Chapter 6 follows the musical development of choro, and some of the main creative forces behind these developments through the 1950s and 1960s. Chapter 7 is entitled "The Choro Revival," and includes a theoretical discussion of revivals, describes the events that promoted the re-popularization of choro in the 1970s, and concludes with the argument that choro's revival began to decline in the 1980s. Chapter 8 provides an overview for the contemporary choro scene, with descriptions and explanations of performances, festivals, recordings, choro education, and choro as an international phenomenon. The final chapter examines the relationship between choro and the classical music tradition in Brazil. Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia also include a CD sampler with their book.

One of the best passages in the book is "The Spirit of Choro: Malícia." *Malícia* is a challenging concept to translate into English, and Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia provide a strong explanation, and select the word to describe the spirit of choro. While

the authors refer to this concept as a "stylistic marker of early choro," it is doubtlessly an important influence on the shaping of the contemporary choro aesthetic, as well. While malícia may no longer be as prevalent and observable in choro today, its influence is seminal. The authors are correct in describing malícia as connected to Afro-Brazilian culture, the concept of *malandragem* and sly wit.

The authors also have a concise and precise description of choro as a genre on pages 11–12, the most important point being that "Choro is, of course, more than its musical components" (12). In other words, while one can describe choro in terms of rhythm, harmony, counterpoint, instrumentation, and mode, choro is much more than the sum of these parts, and often the parts do not follow the definitions described by music theorists and musicologists.

Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia's book is a crucial contribution to choro studies. This is not only because it is the first book in English on the subject, but because its scholarly approach examining the musical, cultural, and social realities surrounding choro provides an innovative and lucid account of a fluid and diverse practice that is nearly one-hundred and fifty years old.

PART II: *THE RIVER, a transition*

With a population of nearly eighteen million people, São Paulo is, by far, the largest city in South America, and is the fourth largest city in the world.[14] Evidently, it is unrealistic and impractical to provide a full account for the history and cultures of São Paulo in an ethnomusicological study about choro. This portion of the report provides an idea of some of the cultural characteristics of São Paulo. In Chapter 4, I examine the lyrics to Caetano Veloso's song, "Sampa," and an excerpt from Peter Robb's *A Death in Brazil*. In Chapter 5, I explain my particular methodology and analysis by discussing relevant ethnomusicological theory. Finally in Chapter 6, this portion explores questions of race and racial discrimination, with special attention paid to the concept of "racial democracy" and how this applies in the context of choro.

[14] This population estimate includes the metro area, plus the immediate surrounding area of the city (http://worldatlas.com/citypops).

Chapter 4: Sampa

Sampa, *Caetano Veloso*, 1978

Alguma coisa acontece no meu coração
Que só quando cruza a Ipiranga e Avenida São João
É que quando eu cheguei por aqui eu nada entendi
Da dura poesia concreta de tuas esquinas

Da deselegância discreta de tuas meninas
Ainda não havia para mim Rita Lee
A tua mais completa tradução
Alguma coisa acontece no meu coração
Que só quando cruza a Ipiranga e avenida São João

Quando eu te encarei frente a frente e não vi o meu rosto
Chamei de mau gosto o que vi, de mau gosto, mau gosto
É que Narciso acha feio o que não é espelho

E à mente apavora o que ainda não é mesmo velho
Nada do que não era antes quando não somos mutantes
E foste um difícil começo
Afasto o que não conheço
E quem vem de outro sonho feliz de cidade

Aprende depressa a chamar-te de realidade
Porque és o avesso do avesso do avesso do avesso

Do povo oprimido nas filas, nas vilas, favelas

Da força da grana que ergue e destrói coisas belas
Da feia fumaça que sobe, apagando as estrelas

Eu vejo surgir teus poetas de campos, espaços
Tuas oficinas de florestas, teus deuses da chuva
Pan-Américas de Áfricas utópicas, túmulo do samba
Mas possível novo quilombo de Zumbi
E os Novos Baianos passeiam na tua garoa

E novos baianos te podem curtir numa boa

Sampa, *my translation*, 2006

Something stirs in my heart
Only when crossing Ipiranga and avenida São João
It's that when I arrived around here, I understood none
Of the hard concrete poetry of your street corners
Of the discrete inelegance of your young ladies
I had not yet discovered Rita Lee
Your most complete translation
Something stirs in my heart
Only when crossing Ipiranga and avenida São João

When I stared at you boldly and couldn't see my own face
I called what I saw in bad taste, in bad taste, bad taste
Because Narcissus thinks anything that is not a mirror is ugly
And the mind is appalled by what is not yet familiar
Nothing that was not here before, when we aren't mutants
And you were a difficult start,
I avert what I do not know
And those who come from another pleasant dream of a city
Learn very quickly to call you reality
Because you're the opposite of the opposite of the opposite

From the oppressed folks in lines, in villages, slums,
From the power of the money that erects and destroys beautiful things
From the ugly smoke that arises, erasing the stars
I see poets emerge from your fields, spaces
Your forest workshops, your gods of rain
Pan-Americas of utopian Africas, tomb of the samba
But possibly the new quilombo of Zumbi
And the New Bahians stroll in your misty drizzle
And new Bahians can enjoy you leisurely

"Texts reflect mechanisms of psychological release and the prevailing attitudes and values of a culture, thus providing an excellent means for analysis" (Merriam, 208). In this chapter I provide a feel for São Paulo, one of the largest cities in the world, by discussing the following two texts: Caetano Veloso's "Sampa," and an excerpt from Peter Robb's non-fiction, *A Death in Brazil*. The purpose of this chapter is to contextualize São Paulo on a micro level by examining how choro is associated with the city, using Caetano Veloso's lyrics in "Sampa" as a springboard; and on a macro level through the lens of Peter Robb.

Sampa

My translation does not nearly capture Caetano Veloso's poetic prowess, but is more of a content-oriented translation. First, I will explain some of the key references in the song.

"Sampa" is an affectionate nickname for São Paulo. Ipiranga and São João are in the central neighborhood of São Paulo, and are synonymous with the city's history of ebbs and flows, fast-paced economic growth and decline. Rita Lee, a *paulistana*, has been remains one of Brazil's most famous rock stars. She is also one of the central figures of the tropicalista movement. The term "mutants" refers to Rita Lee's rock/tropicalista group, "Os Mutantes," that incorporated modern sounds and recording techniques in the late 1960s; innovating Brazilians' concepts of popular music, and revolutionizing notions of national and individual identity. Aside from the Greek mythological figure, Narciso is a common name for Brazilians from Northeastern states, such as Bahia. The name

"Narcissus" is rare amongst Southeasterners. Veloso uses the 2nd person singular "tu" (you) throughout the entire song. "Tu" is rarely used in São Paulo, where "você" (you) is much more common. The use of the name Narciso and the second person "tu" emphasize the narrator's status as a migrant. Although, the nickname "Sampa" sounds phonetically almost identical to the word "samba," the famous Brazilian poet and bossa nova artist, Vinicius de Moraes, once referred to São Paulo as "the tomb of samba," (Cazes, 91) in reference to what he considered a lack of musical vitality in the megalopolis. Quilombos were communities of runaway slaves that survived in the Brazilian inland wilderness. Zumbi (1655–1684) was the warrior-king of the greatest quilombo of all, Palmares, which lasted almost the entirity of the seventeenth century (wikipedia.org). Zumbi is both a historical and mythical figure, that can be described as a composite of Harriet Tubman and Ogum (the Candomblé[15] god of war). The "Novos Baianos" were an influential Brazilian rock band in the 1970s, that incorporated elements of traditional Brazilian music, especially samba and choro into their version of rock'n'roll. They are credited with contributing to the resurgence of choro in Henrique Cazes' "Choro do Quintal ao Municipal." Southeastern Brazilians also use the term "novos baianos" to describe migrants from the Northeast of Brazil, in search of work and economic prosperity, to Southeastern metropolitan areas, such as São Paulo.

The fact that Veloso is able to compress such a wide range of themes into a three minute song is truly admirable, but it also reflects the rapid paced life that is a characteristic of São Paulo, and one of the traits that makes it such a unique city. The

[15] Candomblé is a widespread polytheistic Afro-Brazilian religion (cf. Pierre Fatumbi Verger 2002)

basic story line of the song is that of a Bahian migrant to São Paulo who is suffering from culture shock. But as the song carries on, Veloso notes the paradoxical qualities of São Paulo: it is reality because it is the opposite of opposite opposites; from the starless sky, and oppressed slums, poets emerge. And that is the reality of São Paulo–it is an intimidating, violent, and poor city, but it is also auspicious, cultured, and cosmopolitan.

The most mysterious part of the lyrics comes at the end: "Pan-Americas of utopian Africas, tomb of the samba/But possibly the new quilombo of Zumbi." Veloso acknowledges the internationality and diversity of São Paulo, which is an obvious point, but he also sings of utopian Africas, and the possible new quilombo of Zumbi. These phrases clearly point to a social/racial revolutionary potential in São Paulo that may be distinct from the rest of Brazil.[16] However, since Veloso is the lyricist, it is likely that he is also referring to a theatrical piece entitled "Arena conta Zumbi." Arena was a theatre troupe that Veloso was working closely with in the mid-1960s when he and his sister Maria Bethânia first came to Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo from Bahia. Although Veloso had no direct involvement with the piece on Zumbi, he worked as a contributing composer with Arena on the pieces immediately preceding ("Opinião") and following ("Arena canta Bahia") "Arena conta Zumbi." "Arena conta Zumbi" was deeply significant to Veloso and is strongly associated with São Paulo in his memory, since it was debuted in São Paulo during the time period Veloso dwelled in that city. The show is seen by many intellectuals, including Brazil's most celebrated actress, Fernanda Montenegro, as "the most important show in the modernization of Brazilian theatre"

[16] For an expanded discussion of race, see Chapter 6.

(Veloso 1997, 83, my translation). According to Veloso in his memoir on tropicalismo, *Verdade Tropical*, "Arena conta Zumbi" told the story of the great slave rebel, Zumbi dos Palmares, in a glamorized fashion, despite featuring leftist and Marxist aesthetic concepts such as collectivity–the protagonist, Zumbi, was played in rotation by each of the actors (Veloso 1997, 83).

In those final verses, Veloso also refers to São Paulo as the "tomb of samba," an infamous phrase coined by bossa nova poet Vinicius de Moraes in 1960 in critique of São Paulo's rigid samba and lack of musical creativity. Yet, Veloso juxtaposes this phrase with *choro-canção* musical characteristics. Choro-canção is closely related to early samba. The question to be pondered here is: why does Caetano Veloso, a musician with incredible versatility and a strong tendency towards the vanguard choose to use traditional choro, of all of the possible musical genres he experimented with and developed, to express his thoughts on São Paulo, the industrial capital of South America, and one of Brazil's greatest symbols for modernity an "progress?" Further, why is this the only song he has composed and orchestrated in the choro tradition?

In order to best reflect the ideas expressed in the lyrics, Veloso might have used baião, a northeastern rhythm, to relay the fact that he is narrating the impressions of a migrant Bahian to the megalopolis. A "música caipira" (hick tune) from São Paulo's rural interior might have seemed regionally appropriate. He could have used rock'n'roll, an immensely popular style of music in São Paulo since the 1950s. He might have used a progressive tropicalista sound in homage to Rita Lee; or electronic techno or dance music, so popular in São Paulo's late night clubs from the late seventies through the

beginning of the twenty-first century. He could have used a church organ to reference São Paulo's roots in Jesuit monasteries. He might have orchestrated a rhythmic a capella chant in reference to the black slaves who worked on São Paulo's enormous coffee plantations; or a country tune in reference to the cattle ranchers. Any, or even all, of these possibilities to express what São Paulo is musically might have seemed more representative of São Paulo. After all, neither is choro a *paulista* creation (having originated in Rio de Janeiro), nor is choro a technologically advanced music. Why in all of the possibilities did he choose choro?

I will not put words into Veloso's mouth, and unfortunately I have not had the opportunity to interview him. Nonetheless, I think Veloso chose a choro-canção for this song about São Paulo, which has practically become the unofficial anthem of the city, because choro is strongly associated with São Paulo. There are at least three different reasons São Paulo has strong ties with choro.

The first possible reason for associating choro with São Paulo is historical context. At the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century, when São Paulo first became the economic power of Brazil because of the coffee boom and then through rapid and massive industrialization, the most popular music in Brazil was the music of the chorões, who performed on countless recordings as early as 1907 (Cazes, 42) and were broadcast throughout the entire country starting in 1922 (Diniz, 31). The collective memory of this era remains vivid: one of the best-selling choro albums of recent years is entitled "Café Brasil," and features various celebrity-status MPB artists accompanied by the traditional group from Rio de Janeiro, Época de Ouro, suggesting that there is still a

strong connection in Brazilian discourse between choro and coffee, and thus, choro and São Paulo. By using a choro-canção, it is plausible that Veloso seeks to evoke in the *paulistano* listener a tone of nostalgia for a simpler and more stable time in São Paulo's history. This nostalgia is also conveyed by the migrant, but the migrant feels longing for a different place (Bahia), while the paulistano feels longing for a different time period (the early twentieth century).

Another possible reason for the use of a choro-canção is that by the 1970s, when the resurgence/repopularization/revival of choro that Cazes, Diniz, and Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia refer to was in full swing, São Paulo's great economic capital had drawn major media conglomerates to the city. These same media giants promoted festivals, and competitions of various musics, but in particular "traditional" choro. In this sense, throughout the country choro became associated with São Paulo, even though many, perhaps even most of the musicians who appeared on these broadcasts were not paulistanos or even paulistas.

The third, and most important reason, is that choro *is* an integral part of São Paulo's musical heritage. Choro has been a significant performance practice in São Paulo for over one hundred years. The veterans Israel and Izaías Bueno continue to perform with traditional instrumentation and repertoire, yet creative improvisational technique, and sometimes innovative instrumentation, as well. Many of São Paulo's younger generation of musicians have embraced choro because it is both fun and challenging to play, it is both popular and erudite, it is both written and improvised. Choro is such and

important part of Brazilian music in general, that it is inevitably found, nurtured, explored, performed and created in the greatest Brazilian city of them all, São Paulo.

From a compositional standpoint, Veloso may have chosen to use the choro-canção genre for "Sampa" for any these reasons and perhaps others. Ever a master in capturing, predicting, and expressing popular music trends, Veloso composed and recorded "Sampa" at a time when choro was at the height of its popularity during the resurgence in the late 1970s. "Sampa" was released in 1978 on Veloso's album, "Muito," just one year after "Brasileirinho," Brazil's first national choro festival in 1977 (Cazes, 153).

Omissions

As a São Paulo native, it is useful to look at outsiders' impressions of São Paulo to see what stands out about this city where I grew up. Many traits I may take for granted may be of particular interest, highlighted in a visitors observations. The most striking and concise description I have found of São Paulo follows:

> For the world, Rio goes on being Brazil. São Paulo lacks Rio's splendor of place but it has the sex and drugs and the violence, a lot of money and even more people than money. A Jesuit mission station in the sixteenth century, inland from Portuguese coastal power and near the *índio* souls God wanted, for centuries it stayed a little inland cattle town. Its tough and cruel settler *bandeirantes* were the first Europeans to penetrate Brazil's interior on their long slaving forays against the índios. The hills around São Paulo were perfect for coffee shrubs and in the latter days of slavery São Paulo was transformed by money from the worldwide coffee boom. The European immigrants flooded in to replace the slaves. A million Italians, hundreds of thousands from Portugal, from Japan, from Syria, from Germany, these were the first. São Paulo created and supplied its own demands, and when industry came to Brazil it came first to São Paulo. Now twenty million people make São Paulo maybe the fourth

> biggest human agglomeration on the planet. Rio is huge and lovely and terrifying. São Paulo is huger and more terrifying and not lovely at all. The immensely rich hover over the city's canyons in their own helicopters, fluttering at sunset between the corporate tower and the gated residence. São Paulo has more private helicopters than any other city in the world, more armored limousines, more armored ordinary cars, more armed security personnel and more desperate people than any other urban center on the face of the planet (Robb, 2004, 14–15).

Robb's ability to capture relevant historical facts, and some of the unique characteristics of the city is uncanny. There are of course countless omissions in such a brief statement about such a complex place. Nonetheless, this is an accurate and succinct impression of São Paulo. Although the disparity and injustices of the city may not be exactly what most chorões have on their mind when they are in a peaceful roda on a Sunday afternoon with their friends, the massive city is part of their quotidien life. People who live in São Paulo feel it. We can all see the helicopters avoiding the traffic, and carjackings next to us in traffic. We all know of people who have been murdered at the hands of burglars, drug dealers, or police brutality. We must all confront our morality when we see homeless beggars, street kid addicts, desperate thieves, deceptive tranvestites, diseased prostitutes, and corrupt affluence in our streets and public spaces. This is the tragedy of São Paulo, and chorões in São Paulo face this every day just as every one else does, but they can escape the reality with a sweet melody or beat at a spontaneous or regular roda, or on their own in their imaginations or when they pick up an instrument.

Although choro may appear to be a luxury or an escape from reality, it is also an important part of the social fabric of the city, and is instrumental in the education of the hundreds of people who attend rodas on a regular basis. There is a roda ethic which

subscribes to a racially democratic concept, and emphasizes education in musical and historical matters, as well as respect for both experts and novices. The roda is a much needed (though frequently overshadowed) classroom in an overwhelming and often misguided city.

Chapter 5: Approach

> In any weather, at any hour of the day or night, I have been anxious to improve the nick of time, and notch it on my stick too; to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past and future, which is precisely the present moment; to toe that line. You will pardon some obscurities, for there are more secrets in my trade than in most men's, and yet not voluntarily kept, but inseparable from its very nature. I would gladly tell all that I know about it, and never painting "No Admittance" on my gate.
>
> (Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, 1854)

Thoreau captures one of the challenges that face ethnographers thoroughly in the above passage. Ethnographers are curious and often anxious to discover the mysteries of the culture they are studying. Ethnographers are bound to the present moment, but always thinking of both the past (previous studies), and the future (the eventual ethnography to be written). Ethnographers must inevitably confront the obscurities of culture, and the inability to express some of those secrets no matter how much they study and write. This chapter will provide the reader with a background on my approach to fieldwork and analysis by exposing my thoughts on the principal ethnomusicological texts that have informed this work with the hope that some of the obscurities of my ethnographic work can be revealed.

Anthropology of Music, Alan P. Merriam, 1964

Alan Merriam presents a concise and articulate framing of the development of the field of ethnomusicology, from its early beginnings in the 1880s to the time he was writing the early 1960s at the beginning of his seminal book, *Anthropology of Music*.

This is an extremely useful summary, which helped immensely with my overall understanding of the field and its concerns.

Merriam raises a key complication facing ethnomusicologists, even today, in the very opening sentence of Chapter 1. “Ethnomusicology carries within itself the seeds of its own division” (Merriam, 3). The meaning of this division, however, has changed over time. At first, the original division was between Darwinian evolutionary sound theorists, and music cultural geographers (with a hint of anthropology). The sound theorists sought to explore and describe the sounds as an isolated phenomenon, separate and unrelated to any other aspect of human existence, concerned primarily with comparing, classifying, and ranking hierarchically different exotic musics. Meanwhile, the cultural ethnomusicologists are described “to be shaped by the same theoretical currents which shaped anthropology” (Merriam, 4). At the time, that meant a concern with geographic regional factors. In other words, the question of “*where* rather than upon *how* or *why*” (Merriam, 5) were emphasized. There are hints of criticism in Merriam’s framing of both the evolutionary ethnomusicologists and the geographic ethnomusicologists.

While there is criticism, it is noteworthy that Merriam elaborates a discussion of the roots of ethnomusicology, because this implies that although the original methods may have had flaws, they were necessary and important steps towards the development of ethnomusicology into what Merriam would argue ethnomusicology should be. Merriam suggests a clearer focus on the *hows* and *whys* of music, that is, *process*-oriented ethnomusicology rather than a “static geographic distinctiveness” (Merriam, 5). Nonetheless, while it is in fact crucial to shift the focus of ethnomusicology toward a

more process-oriented methodology, it is important to make explicit that questions of geography and science must also be remembered and taken into consideration, because in order to fulfill Merriam's "basic aim, which is to understand music" (Merriam, 7), we must involve geography and science in addition to other factors, such as culture and religion.

Merriam simultaneously recognizes the importance of, yet is critical towards, ethnomusicological preservation, geographic music appreciation, music as communication, and technical music descriptions. In his final analysis, "the aims and purposes of ethnomusicology do not differ markedly from those of other disciplines the ethnomusicologist shares both with the social sciences and the humanities the search for an understanding of why men behave the way they do" (Merriam, 16).

Merriam's contribution in Chapter I is a brief, coherent, and opinionated fleshing out of the field of ethnomusicology, articulating both its flaws and accomplishments from its beginnings in the 1880s, through the time of his writing in the 1960s. In the last few words of the chapter, however, the reader may be left with an unsettling feeling that little has been resolved concerning the direction and specific purpose of the field.

Merriam's characteristic directness in his opening paragraph is again apparent in Chapter II. While acknowledging the "dual nature" of ethnomusicology with one foot in anthropology and the other in musicology, Merriam claims that "a fusion is clearly the objective of ethnomusicology and the keystone upon which the validity of its contribution lies" (17). It is no small concern raised in this first paragraph. Merriam immediately

places the entire "discipline" of ethnomusicology in check. While asserting ethnomusicology's potential validity, he has ambitiously set out to *prove* its validity.

Merriam begins this challenging task by assessing differences and similarities between humanities and science, or art and science. This ambiguity is extremely problematic. Merriam falls victim to a careless interchange between humanities and art. This disregard for a distinction between art and humanities is probably partly due to the fact that the two are so tightly knit together. Nonetheless, a distinction must be made. While Merriam makes the claim that "humanities are usually held to include the arts," it is unclear whether when he refers to "humanities" he means "the study of arts" (21), or the *practice* of arts themselves. In any case, the reader is faced with the problem of discerning whether Merriam is making his major distinction between arts to science, or humanities to science, or *both* humanities and arts to science. Merriam is also unclear about his distinctions between Sciences and Social Sciences, practically equating the two. Therefore, the reader is left with the vague idea that ethnomusicology exists somewhere in between the sciences and humanities, or as I will point out, somewhere within four broad disciplines).

Merriam does suggest that there is "a valid distinction to be drawn between the process of creating art and the artistic outlook, as opposed to the study of each of these processes" (20). However, his terminology remains vague throughout the entire discussion.

In order to clarify, I will frame each of the four broad disciplines–Art, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Sciences–by examining their contents and practices. In

the following four paragraphs, I will show how sound (especially musical sound) can be interpreted through the lenses of all four of these broad disciplines by describing, then provide concrete examples of each. In addition, I will supply an example of how ethnomusicologists can use each broad discipline.

The Arts apply the practice of creation to the content of feeling–the act of creative expression. Arts generally include, visual arts (such as painting, sculpture, and photography), and performing arts (such as drama, music, and dance). One concrete example of the arts using sound content includes music creatively expressed by the artist through the practice of performance or composition.

The Humanities apply the practice of critical analysis to the content of human creativity (such as a musical performance or recording), in an effort to understand (study, contemplate, analyze, then theorize about) *objets d'art* and human creativity as expressions of feeling and thought. Humanities generally include critical analysis of fields such as religion, philosophy, and literature. One concrete example of musical sound content in the humanities is a review of a music album or score written by a musicologist, music theorist, or music critic.

The Social Sciences apply the practice of understanding to the contents of the functions, workings and tendencies of collective social and cultural structures. Social Sciences are generally understood to include disciplines such as anthropology, economics, and psychology. An ethnomusicologist seeks to explain how a given community's music sounds, and how and why music emerges, lives, functions, and affects the given community. An ethnomusicologist studies musics and their functions as

organs within the body of a social structure. One concrete example of musical sound content in the social sciences is the ethnomusicologist who studies the music of a communal ritual and seeks to explain music as a specialized function of the ritual as a whole. It is important to note here that ethnomusicologists, in addition to being social scientists, also rely on the application of the other broad disciplines in order to understand musical structures, for example. However, I am simply providing an example of an ethnomusicologist working within social scientific methodology.

The Sciences apply the practice of observing a phenomenon, hypothesizing, collecting data, and analyzing the data in order to form a conclusion on the nature of the observed phenomenon. Sciences are generally understood to include disciplines such as biology, chemistry, and physics. One concrete example of musical content through a scientific lens is the acoustic engineer who examines the aural conditions in which to reproduce an idealized musical sound.

Ethnomusicologists (and, in my view, any competent scholar) must rely on different fields and modes of thinking from the broad disciplines at varied times and in diverse contexts. Ethnomusicologists must have a strong grasp of Art, so that they themselves may be musicians[17], in order to hear music with the ears of an artist. Ethnomusicologists must apply critical analysis from the Humanities in order to evaluate performance from a critical point of view and understand structural and tonal content (it is important that ethnomusicologists be aware of their subjectivities and limitations). Ethnomusicologists depend on Social Sciences in order to be competent at fieldwork, and

[17] Cf. Mantle Hood's notion of bimusicality in *The Ethnomusicologist*, 1971.

to understand and theorize about the socio-cultural functions of music within a community. Finally, ethnomusicologists need Sciences to understand how musical instruments are built, sounds produced, and technology is employed during fieldwork.

Although Merriam is ambiguous in his articulation of the distinctions between the four broad disciplines, he clearly argues for interdisciplinary studies of music. Ultimately, Merriam advocates the study on "three analytic levels–conceptualization about music, behavior in relation to music, and music sound itself" (32). This is the essential point, and it is extremely important to keep in mind as an ethnomusicologist.

Despite the distinctions between the broad disciplines, it is crucial to acknowledge the close relationship and even mutualism between each of the four broad disciplines. Music can be examined through the lenses of each of the broad disciplines in various ways, as portrayed above. Ethnomusicologists must recognize the value of an interdisciplinary approach, and not confine themselves to the social sciences. Instead, as Merriam advocates, ethnomusicologists are better informed by listening to music through a varied spectrum of disciplinary lenses.

The most useful lenses Merriam provides in relation to the study of choro are the lenses of concept, use and function. Use "refers to the situation in which music is employed in human action" (Merriam, 210). For choro, the roda is the use, which can be presented in contexts of both informal camaraderie, as well as performative contexts, including competitions, radio, and concerts.

Function "concerns the reasons for its employment and particularly the broader purpose which it serves" (Merriam, 210). In the case of choro, the functions are both

entertainment and educationally oriented. In terms of entertainment, choro is *used* informally and formally as seen above. In terms of education, choro provides musical and social education. The music education choro provides is wide reaching, including questions of orchestration, literacy, improvisation, composition, and history. The social education choro provides is based in the roda ethic, which, in turn, is derived from historical factors, and a concept of racial democracy. Chorões recognize the choro ethic as an ethic of mutual respect for all musicians in the roda. They recognize the function of history as it provides education on past composers, and their contributions, but also as a window into the history of Brazil as a nation. "Function, in particular, may not be expressed or even understood from the standpoint of folk evaluation" (Merriam, 210). This does mean that function *can*not be understood from the emic perspective; it simply means that sometimes function is not understood from the emic perspective. One function that was never explicitly expressed in my fieldwork was that of the roda as an embodiment of racial democracy, although racial democracy is doubtless a concept that chorões are familiar with and in most cases, probably endorse.

I propose that the roda de choro is a school for music, but also for racial democracy. The history of choro with many important figures of various ethnic backgrounds sustains the concept of a Brazilian racial democracy. The behavior of chorões in performance and in every day interaction perpetuates this same concept. And the roda itself transforms the myth of a racial democracy into a reality because of its ethic of mutual respect (at least temporarily). In the next chapter, I will explore what this myth of racial democracy means, and how it works or does not work in the roda de choro.

How Musical is Man? by John Blacking 1973

> Music is a synthesis of cognitive processes which are present in culture and in the human body: the forms it takes, and the effects it has on people, are generated by the social experiences of human bodies in different cultural environments. Because music is humanly organized sound, it expresses aspects of the experience of individuals in society.
> It follows that any assessment of human musicality must account for processes that are extramusical, and that these should be included in analyses of music (89).

If ever there was a concise, comprehensible, and irrefutable argument in defense of ethnomusicology, and more specifically ethnomusicological fieldwork, this is a strong candidate. Blacking's words here are designed to make the case that music is really more than just music. Blacking argues that the study of music inevitably includes the study of the extramusical. This type of reasoning provides the foundation from which social and historical research of musicians of choro springs.

Blacking expands on this point by providing a strictly musicological study of a Venda children's song. He proves that this kind of analysis is ineffectual because it does not "recognize the peculiarities of different musical systems" (90). At this point, Blacking begins to account not only for the peculiarities, but also the cultural practices of the Venda musical universe. Characteristically, Blacking does not stop once his point has been made. Instead he begins to speculate about the creation of these Venda songs. He states "processes of creation were probably unconscious [...]. But [...] they are now learned by conscious imitation rather than by osmosis" (97). Why exactly Blacking ventures into speculations about conscious vs. unconscious here remains a mystery to me. He could have simply referred to the creative process to make his next point, which is

that “principles of the creative process cannot always be found in the surface structures of the music, and many of the generative factors are not musical” (Blacking, 97–98).

Blacking weaves apparently inconsequential Venda peculiarities into a discussion addressing broad generalizations about human understanding and creation of music. The result is Blacking’s unique style, and the framing of an effective method. One particularly noteworthy point is the example of it being commonplace for Venda to apply new words to a same melody, giving the Venda a cultural sophistication in this skill that might be less prominent elsewhere. His point here is that music and cultural upbringing are intimately related. I can attest to the fact that I will probably never be entirely comfortable with scored notation on a Western staff, because I was not exposed to scores from a young age. A similar phenomenon is the difficulty (though not impossibility) in attaining fluency in a foreign language once beyond a certain age. In other words, in general, one will be most comfortable in one’s mother tongue.

Blacking makes one point after the next arguing convincingly that music should not be studied in a vacuum as an isolated phenomenon, but instead that music is just one organ within a cultural body, and in order to understand the musical organ, we must understand how the musical organ interacts with the rest of the cultural body.

I do, however, question Blacking’s statement, “You cannot really learn to improvise” (100). If Blacking is arguing here that, once past a certain level of maturity one cannot become as fluent in improvisation as one who has grown up improvising, I am inclined to agree. However, I must question Blacking’s word choice that one cannot learn how to improvise. Just as I am learning to read score at a later age, I can acknowledge

that I may never become fluent, but I most certainly can and do learn. Similarly, although I may never learn to improvise with the ease and creativity in the choro tradition as gifted chorões such as Izaías Bueno de Almeida, I certainly am capable of improvising in my own way, and can attest that my choro improvisation has improved dramatically over the course of the past year, since acquiring my own seven-string guitar.

Blacking also writes "the essential differences between music in one society and another may be social and not musical" (102). This is his key argument. Once read, it seems self-evident, but the truth is this statement has broad reaching implications, and presents a profound challenge to purely comparative musicological studies.

Not surprisingly, one of the key distinctions that might be more social than musical has to do with one of the functions of music in society. Blacking points out that,

> Some music expresses the actual solidarity of groups when people come together and produce patterns of sound that are signs of their group allegiances; and other music expresses theoretical solidarity when a composer brings together patterns of sound that express aspects of social experience (104).

This point unveils one of the most important social considerations surrounding music. The distinction here is between an authentic human solidarity and a theoretical solidarity. This is a serious and legitimate attack upon hierarchical societies, and the current division of labor. The solidarity that Blacking refers to can be applied to choro as well. Choro, however, represents a synthesis of the two types of solidarity Blacking discusses: theoretical and actual. While actual solidarity in the concept of racial democracy is observable and felt in the roda, the theoretical nationwide racial democracy is yet to be achieved.

One of the most beautiful ideas Blacking discusses in this chapter is that there "is evidence which suggests that, [...] human creativity [...] is in fact a collective effort that is expressed in the behavior of individuals" (106). Music in groups provides perhaps one of the most convincing pieces of evidence that human creativity is often collective. Blacking has more than enough evidence to support this argument both with his examples of childhood Venda songs learned almost through osmosis, and "When they share the experience of an invisible conductor" (107). Not surprisingly, these same ideas can be applied to a roda de choro. While the roda highlights the soloist, any choro connoisseur knows that the roda experience is an absolutely collective effort. For example, in many cases chorões told me that they listen to the contrapuntal accompaniment of Pixinguinha's clarinet, or the seven-string baixaria on Dino Sete Cordas guitar, at least as closely as they listen to the soloist.

I disagree with Blacking's fatalistic argument that music can only "confirm situations that already exist" (108). I am not sure how to refute the argument, but I certainly think that music can bring on new situations that have not previously existed. Further, I think that music at its best is transcendental and can expose entirely different and new concepts, ideas, and even ways of perceiving reality.

Blacking argues that despite the "fact" that music can do little more than perpetuate something that is already there, the very survival of humanity may depend on music. This is a complicated argument that may deserve further exploration, because, if true, humankind's survival may depend on the study of how exactly humanity depends on music.

> Ethnomusicology has the power to create a revolution in the world of music and music education, if it follows the implications of its discoveries and develops as a method, and not merely an area, of study (Blacking, 4).

Ethnomusicological revolution may appear to be anything from an ambitious idealistic dream to an attempt at radicalism coming from an academic. However, in my view Blacking is firm in his conviction with reason. In order to respond appropriately to this quotation, please forgive the following reflexive indulgence.

Who knows when I was first introduced to music? Perhaps I was even capable of hearing music before leaving my mother's womb. Whenever I first heard music I cannot recall. I do remember spelling my last name for the first time as I sat in the back of the family Honda Accord driving across San Francisco's Bay Bridge. I recall going to the movie theatre for the first time, and crying as Bambi's mother died in the forest fire, I can even reminisce riding a bicycle without training wheels for the first time when I was six years old. But music for the ears is more analogous to food for a hungry stomach. One may not recall the first time that hunger was satisfied with nutritious motherly milk, but in a way, one never forgets. Music is a part of life that is always here, present beyond memory.

Yet, somehow, in my elementary and high school educational upbringing, music was not central. Every day I learned how to formally analyze two languages. I learned histories of various nations. I learned math and physical education. But I had to go out of my way to learn music. Despite the constant mediation of music through radio, cassettes, records, and television, I had to make detours from my daily routine in order to spend any quality time with music. Why did music seem so academically distant if my school had a

music teacher, and even a school band? I was never encouraged to study music in school by anyone, not peers, and not teachers. Thankfully, my mother bought me a guitar at age thirteen and I haven't let go since. However, the little music I did learn how create I learned informally, primarily on my own, and by ear.

Why didn't I learn music formally? Firstly, we were only given one forty-minute session per week in elementary school, and once in middle and high school, music in a classroom setting was even less frequent. But it was not just the lack of time dedicated to music; it was also the how music was presented. We were left with no room for creativity. We had no access to musical instruments. We were expected to sing whatever the teacher had decided. We had no input. So, the music was usually of no interest.

Nonetheless, somehow the potential revolution of ethnomusicology is already taking place in my life. I have had to seek this revolution out; I have been chasing down opportunities in the world of music for the past ten years. Finally, the opportunity has presented itself. I am in an environment where I can focus on music, all because of the existence of ethnomusicology in a formal academic setting.

Ironically, I spent much of my "music time" at the University of Texas - Austin studying those musics which ethnomusicology is not typically understood to study–namely Western Tonal Harmony and Baroque music (which are important supplements to understanding musical form and structure). However, if the only way to study music in an academic environment were the way it is presented in most Western art music classrooms, I would quickly gather my pencils and guitar, and move elsewhere.

Thankfully, ethnomusicologists have been creating space for alternative approaches to the teaching and learning of music for the past 120 years.

In my studies of ethnomusicology I was able to find a style of music that synthesizes anthropological concepts and aural traditions with some of the skills I learned in the study of the Western canon and music composed on Western staff. Choro is an excellent interdisciplinary musical example. It combines a rich socio-historical topic with Western notational scores, and improvisation.

Similarly to Western cult of the personalities (whether rock stars, jazz legends, or art music composers), choro also has a list composers and performers that are recognized as part of the canon of choro geniuses. Turning again to Blacking,

> We talk freely of musical genius, but we do not know what qualities of genius are restricted to music and whether or not they might find expression in another medium. Nor do we know to what extent these qualities may be latent in all men (7).

It is perhaps impossible to know to what extent qualities of musical genius exist in all men. Nor do we know to what extent qualities of mathematical, or athletic, or any other kind of genius exist in all men. However, in the current academic system, we are probably more effective in locating mathematical genius, or athletic genius, than we are of pinpointing musical genius. This is for two main reasons 1) music has become virtually inseparable from the score in our Western Heritage, and 2) since music must account for contexts and tastes, it is extremely challenging, if not impossible, to assess musical genius objectively. This is not to say the assessing genius objectively should be the central concern of any academic discipline.

Ethnomusicology is contributing immensely to freeing Western Academia from the music = the score equation, by supplying courses that do not even use scores (reflecting the numerous scoreless musical systems throughout the world). Further, ethnomusicology welcomes different types of musicians into academia, and in so doing nurtures a variety of musicians who would otherwise have no academic opportunities. These musicians are capable of contributing to the understanding of music in invaluable ways, and may eventually contribute to holding "out hope for a deeper understanding of all music" (Blacking, 31).

Chorões in informal rodas rarely use scores as references, although written music on a Western staff is undoubtedly an important part of the choro tradition. Choro is unique in the sense that it mixes scored composition with aural improvisation extensively and intensively. It does so extensively because hybridism between aural and scored music is observable in a wide variety of contexts, from the informal roda to the formal concerts at municipal theatres and cultural institutes. Choro combines the scored and aural practices intensively because choro is profoundly improvisational, as well as deeply valued for its scored compositions by Brazilian art composers such as Heitor Villa-Lobos, Antonio Carlos Jobim, and Egberto Gismonti (to name a few).

Blacking's work has provided a foundation from which ethnomusicologists from predominantly outside of standard Western trained tradition can present their works. This is particularly valuable for the study of musics outside or partially outside of the Western art musical heritage such as choro.

Speech, Music, and Speech about Music, Charles Seeger, 1977

The ambition of Seeger's project in this chapter cannot be underestimated: "The core of the undertaking is the integration of speech knowledge in general and the speech knowledge of music in particular [...] with the music knowledge of music" (16). At this rate, the reader might expect to be touched with irrepressible musical composition inspired directly from and while reading this article. Of course, this is not what happens. However, Seeger *does* successfully frame and problematize the relationship between and overlap of music and speech; no small task. This work is relevant to any study of music, and I have thus included a discussion of it here.

Seeger begins his theorizing by distinguishing between different "modes" of speech. He names these modes affective, reasoned, and discoursive.

Affective speech is concerned with "the recognition and assertion of value" is "end-motivated" (Seeger, 17). The affective mode is perhaps the most paradoxical and complicated of modes. While the affective mode has as its central goal reality or truth, it can never reach this goal absolutely. Seeger argues that the "affective mode pits a belief in nonspeech and the knowledge of inner experience against speech knowledge and social values. However, (though Seeger might disagree) one can understand affective discourse's goal as itself. That is, the practice of communication about metaphysical truths as the end in and of itself. The affective mode of speech seems to be the most applicable to music, and especially to choro, where inner experience and improvisation are valued.

The reasoned mode is explained as "origin-motivated" and is the discourse of "the great sciences" (Seeger, 17). Again, although absolute truth is ineffable, the practice of the reasoned mode is to assist in unveiling truths, uncovering "cause and effect." Given the register of his book, Seeger's writing reads as almost entirely in this reasoned mode of discourse, despite his claiming otherwise (18). The irony is that it is difficult to discuss music, its composition, production, and effects on people in this mode, but, as Seeger asserts, "that is worthwhile, that is, valuable" (17). Seeger also recognizes that this assumption that "the pursuit is worthwhile" (19) is a purely subjective value judgment. In other words, the reasoning behind the scientific mode of discourse is based upon the affective mode's subjectivity. My report on choro in São Paulo and seven-string guitarists is based in the reasoned mode of speech, as it is an academic study.

The third mode is the discoursive mode, which is described as generalized, the mode "of daily life, of common sense" (Seeger, 17) of practicality. Perhaps Seeger claims that his "essay pretends to be written in that variant of the discoursive [as a] scientific criticism" (18), in order to signal to the readers that they should understand his essay as less absolutist. Much of the fieldwork for this study of choro was conducted in the discoursive mode of speech, simply getting directions to new locations, and accomplishing simple goals such as scheduling interviews.

Interestingly, Seeger associates the affective mode to religion and mysticism; reasoned discourse to science; and discoursive mode to humanities. I find these generalizations practical and to an extent refreshing in a day when few scholars write with such ambitious scope and far reaching implications. Yet, at the same time, one

should be mindful that the modes of discourse can and do overlap, *especially* in the field of ethnomusicology, where music is primarily affective, and ethnography combines both the discoursive (social) and reasoned (sciences) modes.

Directly following the definitions of these three modes of discourse, Seeger presents the reader with a diagram of the location of the different modes within a large square. Again, Seeger states ambitiously and matter-of-factly, "The large square represents the total potentialities of speech communication" (18). This statement is quite contestable. How can, and why would someone box in and *limit* the potentialities of speech? It is also contestable that the "ultimate goal" is critique. Nonetheless, the diagram is useful, and his point, illustrating the location visually and explaining through writing the relationships of these different discourses, is well articulated, if perhaps limiting.

After much theoretical justification, Seeger finally states his proposition "to achieve [...] a fitting together of the affective and reasoned modes of speech communication in a single unified model of their relationship to music and its communicatory process" (19). But Seeger disregards the discoursive mode of speech which is so crucial to successfully accomplishing fieldwork.

Seeger states "*communication* will be understood here to name transmission of energy in a form" (19). Further, a human can choose to communicate through tactile, auditory, or visual modes. Seeger suggests that there is overlap between the three using Venn diagrams and placing musics and spoken languages within the realm of auditory.

Seeger then summarizes the "principles of criteria for judgment [...] every musicologist operates in" (23), while recognizing the overlap and synecdochal characteristics of each principle. He briefly delves into the problematics of synecdoche within communication and music, an extremely complicated discussion, then presents the principles.[18]

The principles he presents are fairly unproblematic and reasonable, to Seeger's merit, because these are not easy to explain. Seeger successfully describes sixteen principles of the human relationship to communication, again no small task.

Seeger's essay, "Speech, Music, and Speech about Music" is a foundational paper that tackles a broad range of tasks. Seeger lays out the problematics, complications, and some of the potential effects of the discourse on the relationship between speech and music, and how they are used to communicate. In this study of choro, it is important to discuss some of Seeger's ideas about speech and music, because the incompatability between speech and music certainly applies, and there is no way to fully translate the experience of a roda de choro, or improvising on a seven-string guitar through the limiting mode of spoken or written word.

Toward a Reassessment of the Ethnomusicologist's Role in Research, Gourlay, 1978

In addition to examining "the concept of the ethnomusicologist" in different theories of research method, Gourlay proposes to articulate a "research model which

[18] It is worth noting that Seeger acknowledges song as a separate form with a separate set of implications.

allows for Blum's contention that 'any ethnomusicologist, like any of his informants [...] is subject to particular social constraints.'" (1)

In his first elaboration, Gourlay explains three forms of constraints–personal, situational, and universal. These are practical concepts in articulating the limitations of ethnomusicology as a field of study. In fact, these constraints seem to work for other social sciences as well. Nonetheless, they are "crucial to the evolution of theory" (2) in ethnomusicology and perhaps can be applicable to other fields of study also.

The first broadly criticized constraints are those directed at Alan Merriam. Gourlay argues that Merriam eliminates the ethnomusicologist. That is, in his quest for a perfect balance between musicology and anthropology, Merriam eliminates the ethnomusicologist by focusing strictly on musicology and anthropology, instead of ethnomusicology, which ideally would be a constant synthesis of both disciplines, instead of a two part analytical study, one musicological and one anthropological. Gourlay values Merriam's theoretical contribution to the field as "an advance nearer to its solution" (5). However, Gourlay is unforgiving in his critique of Merriam's methodological proposition when he argues that our "object is not to reject Merriam's aims but to demonstrate the impossibility of their realization within his accepted frame of reference" (5).

In my understanding, Merriam does not eliminate the ethnomusicologist at all. From my perspective, Merriam's idea of what an ethnomusicologist does is simply different from Gourlay's. To Merriam, the importance of ethnomusicology lies in its potential balance between musicology and anthropology. This is not an unreasonable idea, especially if one considers how the different lenses of anthropology and musicology

provide potentially complimentary *objective* insight into a music and its culture. Whereas for Gourlay, this balance between two fields is not the field's goal, neither is it even possible to be so *objective*. Further, Gourlay values the *subjectivities* of the ethnomusicologist. In this work I have tried to achieve some balance between a reflexive and subjective approach by including discussion of my personal approach and the works that have influenced this study, but I have also striven to communicate some of the consensual points of reference amongst chorões objectively.

Perhaps more urgent is Gourlay's critique of Merriam turning a blind eye to the performer and performance. This, indeed, is of great concern and is a much more incisive criticism. As Gourlay points out on page 9, Merriam does not even include "performance" in his index, and when it finally is included in a later publication, it reported as one-sided (through the musicological and pedagogical lenses). However, this may just be a semantic difference, because although "performance" is lacking in Merriam's index, Merriam's discussion of function, use and concept are each applicable to performance. Not only are they applicable, in my understanding, the ideas of function and use are specifically for the analysis of culture through the examination of performance.

Gourlay's concern to reintroduce the ethnomusicologist is well taken. His starting point, as mentioned above, is that we are all subject to various constraints. These constraints then provide us with certain subjectivities, approaches, and "world views." Instead of trying to eliminate the subjectivities and "world views" of the ethnomusicologist, Gourlay advocates embracing them, making them explicit and raising

awareness of them for both ethnomusicologists and their readers. I have striven to make some of my "world views" explicit throughout this study.

Further, Gourlay proposes a dialectical approach to ethnomusicology. Gourlay's dialectical approach may be more realistic than Merriam's search for perfect balance between musicology and anthropology, but it is not necessarily much more effective in terms of actual methodology or results. In other words, I am of the opinion that Gourlay's dialectical approach can be synthesized with Merriam's supposedly impossible anthropo-musicological approach. That is, Merriam and Gourlay are not mutually exclusive, but may build off of each other.

While Merriam's ideas tend to be more theoretical, academic and presentationally oriented, Gourlay stresses the fieldwork side of the study, and is a precedent to the reflexive approach to ethnography that is explored by Barz, Cooley, et al (see next section). Gourlay's dialectical notion applies directly to how the ethnomusicologist behaves, inquires, studies, and learns in the field during the preparatory period and the research process. However, I think Gourlay's notion of a dialectical approach should be stretched further into the presentation process particularly when considering Merriam's methods. It is true that Gourlay is in fact using a kind of dialectical approach in this theoretical writing by making reference to Merriam and others' methodologies. Yet beyond this theorizing, Merriam's approach could benefit quite a bit from Gourlay's dialectical proposition by applying these dialectics directly to Merriam's anthropology and musicology dichotomy. That is, the dialogue between musicology and anthropology is valuable in the study of ethnomusicology. Gourlay's dialectics apply not only to

ethnomusicology, but also to musicology, anthropology, and perhaps various other fields, and the dialogues that can exist between each. These dialectics reveal the valuable flexibility and interdisciplinarity of ethnomusicology, and along with Blacking's and Merriam's ideas, provide the basis for my approach to choro studies.

Shadows in the Field, Gregory Barz & Timothy Cooley, 1997

Another text that had a strong impact on how I approached this project is *Shadows in the Field*. Ten ethnomusicologists contributed to make *Shadows in the Field* a thorough examination of the crisis that ethnographers were facing at the end of the twentieth century. Cooley states that the current ethnographic crisis is in fieldwork, and not in representation (as Seeger argued in his incompatability between speech and music argument). In this study of choro the challenge of representing music through the written word is still quite present, as there is no way to completely communicate the experience of participating in a roda. However, some of the experience can be represented through conceptualizations such as use, function, and concept, and musical examples are provided in the accompanying soundtrack.

The more challenging question is: what is the value of the fieldwork experience? The authors of *Shadows in the Field* consensually respond that at least a partial answer to this question lays in the dialogic interaction between the field researcher and the community being studied.

At the heart of this polygraphy is the question of the ethnographers agency in the field. According to the authors, the scholar is understood as a "social actor" (Barz &

Cooley, 4). In choro studies, I think this idea is especially relevant in resolving both Seeger's crisis in representation, as well as the proposed crisis in experience. There is no way to represent choro unless one understands its culture, and the best way to understand choro, is to participate in the roda. As Kisliuk points out, "there is much one can only know by doing" (Barz & Cooley, 17). In the roda, the scholar inevitably contributes to the communal sound, as well as the its ethic. Admittedly, I did not spend nearly as much time as I had hoped participating in rodas, and spent more time observing them.[19]

Although in an ideal study, more time would have been spent in the roda, acquiring more fluent bimusicality as proposed by Mantle Hood, the fact remains that the ethnographer (in this case, myself) is a social actor. Although I feel indebted to them, in the sense that "'informants' give, 'researchers' take" (Barz & Cooley, 208), I was able to establish sincere dialogue and friendly rapport with my informants. My role as a social actor remained, as I was expected to participate in dialogue, socializing, making and listening to music.

I also took the step of becoming a consumer of their music, purchasing, cds, instruments, and attending concerts. Even though this is not typically recognized as the work of a "social actor," I believe the consumer side of music study is often overlooked. It is certainly the case for the luthier, João Batista (from whom I bought a guitar), that people like myself are part of the reason he is able to make a living off of his fine craft,

[19] Tamara Livingston-Isenhour and Thomas Garcia were able to participate in many rodas, and share some of those experiences in their excellent study *Choro: A Social History of a Brazilian Popular Music*.

since each guitar is worth at least R$1000 (US$430), which equals the sum of over three months worth of Brazil's minimum wage (R$300, about US$130).

In short, even in a study with limited amounts of time spent in the field, ethnographers must recognize their roles as social actors in the community, and the implications whether musical, social, or financial.

Revival

At the beginning of the twentieth century, João Pernambuco and Catulo da Paixão Cearense began an effort to revive the modinha through performance. In the 1930s, Pinto tackled the resurgence of choro with his pen. In the 1950s and 60s, choro mandolin virtuoso Jacob Bittencourt attempted to rescue choro from the overpowering wave of bossa nova, jazz and rock'n'roll. Although many scholars would not label Jacob's efforts as a revival, most would agree that he was *resisting* the musical change that bossa nova implied. According to Cazes, Diniz, and Livingston-Isenhour & Garcia, the major revival of choro came in the 1970s. I am forced to ask, when was choro not experiencing a revival? In various conversations with Dr. Gerard Béhague, he told me to carefully examine the question of revival in relation to choro.

Garcia and Livingston-Isenhour argue that there was a choro revival in the 1970s. This is an argument that is also endorsed by Henrique Cazes in his book *Choro: do Quintal ao Municipal* (1998), although he uses the term "resurgence." Dr. Béhague made the point that there was no revival because there was never a decline of chorões who continued to play and perform. The fact that Altamiro Carrilho, Jacob do Bandolim and

Waldir Azevedo, perhaps the most influential, and recognized names in choro second only to Pixinguinha, produced a healthy amount of recording in the fifties and sixties is not ignored by Cazes, Garcia and Livingston-Isenhour. However, they insist that there was a resurgence in the 1970s.

While choro may have become more visible again in the seventies, after bossa nova dominated national and international media broadcasting throughout the sixties, it is important to recognize that choro continued to be a major force of Brazilian music throughout this time period with Jacob do Bandolim, Altamiro Carrilho, and Waldir Azevedo in Rio de Janeiro, and the famous Conjunto Atlântico in São Paulo. I am not denying that groups such as "Novos Baianos" contributed to a repopularization of choro in the 1970s. However, choro has a long history of resurgences, revivals and resistance, as is evidenced by the work of Pinto, Jacob do Bandolim, the efforts of TV Bandeirantes, and cultural institutions such as Instituto Jacob do Bandolim, Instituto Moreira Salles, and Cachuera. It is also fundamental to understand that along with resistance in choro, comes a tradition for innovative creativity evidenced by a wide range of artists from Antonio Callado, to Chiquinha Gonzaga, to Pixinguinha, to Dino Sete Cordas, to Raphael Rabello, to Israel Bueno de Almeida, to Hamilton de Holanda. Choro is an aural paradox of simultaneous resistance and innovation,

Chapter 6: Transcending Racial Discrimination

This chapter examines the concept of racial democracy as a form of multiculturalism, and proposes that the roda de choro has the potential for realizing racial democracy in a land where racial democracy is little more than a myth.

After Women's Liberation, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Sexual Revolution, multiculturalism emerged as one of the dominant progressive ideologies in the Western Hemisphere, originally as a direct attack upon notions of male white supremacy.

There are two contesting central branches of multiculturalism. The first is a tendency towards racial hybrid ambivalence; I will call this "colorblind" multiculturalism. The second is a tendency towards essentialism; I will call this "essentialist" multiculturalism. Neither of these discourses allows for the fulfillment of liberation. I will argue for a synthesis of these two multiculturalist discourses as a process of liberation that can be witnessed in a roda de choro.

One of the great assets of colorblind multiculturalism is that it provides a forum from which to acknowledge identities, including historical, racial, sexual, gendered, religious, cultural, political, ancestral, social, economic, national, professional, and generational, to name just a few. Hybridization in the forms of *mulataje* and *mestizaje*, run the risk of erasing this acknowledgement, by making ancestry and cultural praxis nebulous.

Multiculturalism within a capitalist framework offers a tempting and powerful financial incentive: if one works hard, independent of race, it will eventually pay off. Whether or not this philosophy is true or not is irrelevant. What is important here is simply that the financial incentive exists, and is endorsed by hegemonic power structures.

The central critique to colorblind multiculturalist discourse is that it has been appropriated by the wealthy and politically potent elite and is now being used to perpetuate a system of suppression and domination. In Latin America, the overwhelming majority of wealthy people are white people who have benefited (consciously or not) from centuries of holocaustal enslavement, violent oppression, humiliating exploitation, selective genocide, and judicial impunity, all to the great demise of other peoples, especially Native Indians and the African Diaspora. Despite its good intentions, the current vogue discourse of (colorblind) multiculturalism, within the frames of mulataje and mestizaje, is still to the advantage of wealthy elites, who in São Paulo, and most other places, are overwhelmingly "white."

Through the globalizing capitalist system, it is socially tolerable and politically acceptable to discriminate based on social class positioning and/or material wealth, even while upholding multiculturalist discourses. Paradoxically, yet cunningly, the very same discourse that condemns racism and endorses tolerance and diversity simultaneously *justifies* discrimination based on social class, which is historically a direct result of racial interpolation. This paradox plays itself out much differently in a roda de choro. Social and economic status have little or no bearing on the respect given to musicians in the roda. Racial or ethnic background have no wieght either as far as I could observe. In fact,

even musicians' skill levels do not establish an elite class in the roda. Outside of the roda, skill level is recognized and lends authority to great chorões, but in the roda, even the great chorões are contributing to a collective sound, just as the novices are. Naturally a musician with a higher degree of skill will contribute more, but this does not place her or him in a separate exclusionary class, as race or economic status do on a macro level in society. Gender roles are more complicated as women are still striving to gain equal footing in the roda, but even gender inequality is being challenged in the roda as female groups and intergender groups are becoming more common.

In one of my first graduate school seminars, "Identity Politics in Latin America," taught by Dr. Charles Hale (Autumn 2003) in a session that included Jafari Allen as a guest speaker, one concern in class discussion was that through discourses of mulataje and mestizaje, we risk witnessing the death of blackness under the guise of multiculturalism. According to Allen, this idealistic and utopic multiculturalist cosmovision, presented through notions of mestizaje and mulataje are accepted forms of multiculturalism, while in fact functioning as adapted modern versions of "whitening." Allen's concern is legitimate because even in supposed egalitarian states, such as Cuba, and in imagined racial democracies, such as Brazil, racism, homophobia and sexism persist in daily life and are evident in hierarchical power structures, such as political organs and economic status.

Kim Butler critically explains the notion of "whitening" as the mixing of white Brazilians with other races, with the implied belief that whites, allegedly the superior race, would eventually whiten Brazil in *Freedom's Given, Freedoms Won*. This

"whitening" was endorsed by many intellectuals, such as Euclides da Cunha at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century, and was central to concepts of Brazilian identity and nationality.

One of the keys to combating discrimination (racial, sexual, economic, or any other) is through identity politics. Unlike the dominant discourse, however, identity politics go deeper than acknowledgement. Identity politics demand consideration and respect for, knowledge of, connection to, and "radical becoming" through history (in the case argued by Allen), race, sex, culture, and music. This consideration, respect for, and knowledge of are embodied in the roda de choro, where there is a respect for the past, a consideration for fellow chorões, and a knowledge of music, regardless of racial identity, and thus a legitimization and concrete example of racial democracy.

In my interpretation, identity politics, particularly through cultural activities such as a roda de choro, can be used as a strategy for repossessing multiculturalist discourse in order to combat discrimination based on socio-economic class (which, as discussed above, is directly associated with race), with the ultimate aim of producing an egalitarian society, or at least one of equal opportunity.

In contrast to "color-blind" multiculturalism enforced through financial discrimination and discourses of nationalism, mulataje, and mestizaje, I am suggesting that there is space for a multiculturalism that takes into account a meticulous analysis of identity politics. In order to imagine this progressive multicultural experience, a profound examination of identity politics must include (but is not limited to) consciousness of ancestral-cultural heritage, such as the historical narrative of choro, that includes mulatos,

Afro-Brazilians, and European Brazilians as key contributors, self-making, and the ability to "feel free" (Allen). Nonetheless, this progressive multicultural identity politics runs certain theoretical risks, and one direct problem with choro is its lack of a historical narrative in relation to native Brazilian indigenous peoples, as well as immigrants from Middle-Eastern and Eastern backgrounds, and in this study, especially the Japanese who are so prevalent in São Paulo. One way to incorporate Middle-Easterners, at least, would be to deepen the discussion on the origins of the pandeiro, which has Middle-Eastern origins, or to include an indigenous flute as part of a choro ensemble, for example.

In regards to ancestral-cultural heritage, one risk is guilt or shame of one's past. Racial guilt can be present in anyone independent of race. In order to overcome this shame, I suggest studying histories of one's own ancestry as well as that of others, in efforts to come to terms with and affect our present differences towards a more inclusive society. But the historical side is just one aspect of the choro ethic, and is not the focal point. The focal point is the roda itself, as a space for transcending the racism inherent to Brazilian social inequality, and realizing a community of racial democracy through musical expression.

Once the realization that the present is valuable occurs, there is the opportunity for intimate musical exchange becomes a reality. This exchange is what has kept the roda de choro alive for almost a century and a half, and is what continues to attract new musicians, and transcend racial and economic barriers on a daily basis.

Self-making is deeply connected to both cultural-ancestral past and the intimacy of the present, but also includes a consideration of potential selves (an awareness of the

future). Some of the dangers of self-making include self-deception and vice. I think the prime antidotes to dangerous self-making are health praxis (literal health, such as physical exercise and a balanced diet), social consciousness (represented by political activism, engagement with the community, friendship, responsibility for one's actions), and especially mental creativity (to which choro has the potential of contributing immensely).

"Feeling free" and liberation are thus made possible through the process of learning of cultural-ancestral histories, healthy and conscious self-making and transcendent intimacy. Healthy and conscious self-making are not part of the choro hidden curriculum, but cultural-ancestral histories, and transcendent intimacy through collective creative rodas certainly are part of choro's objectives and results.

While colorblind multiculturalism overemphasizes the present essentialist multiculturalism prioritizes the past. Neither of these discourses on multiculturalism provides us with the means to overcome racism. Ultimately, one viable solution to racial discrimination is for individuals to actively seek their own liberation, while respecting and encouraging others' processes of "feeling free." This does not signify the social death of Brazilianness, Paulistanness, Aboriginess, Africanness, Arabness, Asianess, Europeanness, Jewishness, Indianness, Mestizaje or Mulataje. These ancestral connections to racial identities are both socially and individually constructed and interpolated, and will continue to be passed on from one generation to the next.

According to social scientist, Jonathan Warren, race is not a fixed biological trait, but is instead a fluid, shifting, and subjective form of identification that requires

imagination. What Warren refers to as "posttraditional Indians" are (as Warren himself points to) not necessarily seen as Indians at all by the state or the society in which they live. This is problematic because different people are using different definitions and conceptualizations of race. Race, then, involves subjective understandings.

Based on this conceptualization, it is striking that Warren is so clear about posttraditional Indian separativeness. This type of racial uniqueness my be passé. Warren may be right: as a Brazilian of predominantly (or perhaps exclusively) European descent, I may be unaware of my own racisms; but this does not mean that I am not willing to not stand up against racial discrimination. Growing up in São Paulo, I could not even count the times I had to confront peers on their racist attitudes. So far, I have only proven Warren right by reacting defensively to uphold my large emotional investment in a racial democracy. Nonetheless, there are some hard cold facts. Our current president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva was the most voted for president in the history of the world. People in Brazil *do* vote independent of their race. This is not to say that there is no racism in Brazil, because that would be obscenely off the mark. I, personally, witnessed racism in Brazil of kinds: from child pranks and bad jokes to disappropriation, racial exorcism, marginalization, and disenfranchisement. It is true, race problems in Brazil persist. But I do not see how Warren is remedying the situation by belittling the Movimento Negro in Brazil (which still exists and goes through ebbs and flows), for example.

Warren has fearlessly confronted the problem of racial discrimination against the Indians of Brazil, pointing to inconsistencies and corruptions of Brazilian society and governmental agencies. But one might also recall that there are people in Brazil who are

fighting for Indian rights, and Afro-Brazilian rights, and Women's rights and the rights of the landless. The social and economic problems in Brazil are so grave that Warren may think he is fighting this battle alone with the Indians against the rest of Brazil. I don't think that is the best way to be thinking about the problems of inequality and injustice in that country.

This is not to belittle the work of Warren and the posttradition Indians who have struggled to win back rights, and continue to struggle with inequalities and racial discrimination every day. In response to some of Warren's criticisms I felt an obligation to defend some of the work that has been done in Brazil to uprise, and strengthen the cause of a more egalitarian nation. One place where racial democracy occurs is in the roda de choro. It does not matter if someone is a postraditional Indian, a mulato, a mestizo, an Afro-Brazilian, or a Euro-Brazilian in the roda de choro. What matters in the roda, is aural experience and creativity, to which all, independent of race, are welcome to contribute.

There are millions of Brazilians who refuse to allow racism to bring them down; there are millions more who stand up for the rights of people of different races, simply because they feel it's the right thing to do. It is a long and arduous and often discouraging battle in a country where land reform is screamingly urgent, and the distribution of wealth is an embarassment. But, a practice such as choro does contribute to some degree of racial solidarity, even if it is fabricated, in a country that faces such serious inequality.

Warren states, "most racial subalterns [...] fail to grasp how white supremacy underpins their economic and social marginalization" (Warren, 270). If this is true,

Warren and others have taken important steps to cast light on this shadow. However, in my experience, "racial subalterns" are well aware of the link between race and marginalization. I have heard many people of different economic stati, and of similar racial self-identification acknowledge the question of race as a chief contributor to the determination of socio-economic status.

Warren's work is courageous, and brings to light many aspects of Brazilian Indianness. It is truly a long needed victory on behalf of Brazilian Indians and Warren to make explicit and concrete the resurgence of Indian and Indianness in Brazil. It is crucial to the Indian of course, but also to the country as a whole. What I do not share is the notion that most people are just allowing racism and [male] white supremacy to continue in Brazil. Especially when it comes to Afro-Brazilians I found it hard to swallow Warren's criticisms. It might have done more for the cause against [male] white supremacy if Warren had remained focused on the object of his study (the resurgence of the Brazilian Indian), instead of trying to make sweeping arguments that belittle the cause of Afro-Brazilians and other black and mixed people throughout the continent.

In order to overcome racism, while avoiding the traps of both essentialist and colorblind multiculturalism, I think of identity politics as a *process* rather than a product or essence. During this *process of liberation*, there is a tightrope of identity formation to be walked that involves balancing, on the one hand, ancestry, cultural heritage, social politics, and genealogy, and on the other hand, self-making, individuality, personal politics and intimacy. Choro shares with many other musics the potential to contribute to processes of liberation for individuals on the mental, bodily, and spiritual planes because

of its rootedness in cultural history, its creative compositional technique, its emphasis on spontaneous improvisation, and the ethics of the roda.

PART III: *THE OCEAN, an ethnography*

Having grown up in São Paulo may seem to provide an automatic insiders perspective on my subject matter–choro paulistano. While being a paulistano certainly moved my project along faster than it would have gone otherwise, my relationship to choro in São Paulo was practically that of a complete outsider. Virtually all I knew about choro concerned Rio de Janeiro, i.e. from recordings and books, and some performances I saw while I lived in Rio de Janeiro in 2002. In other words, in order to establish an understanding of choro in São Paulo, it helped that I was a native of the city, however, since choro is a universe unto itself, I was studying the subject matter from an etic point of view.

The basic methodology I followed was to read as much as I could about choro in from the UT Benson library, before I left for São Paulo in late May, 2005. I knew I had to cover the historical background before I arrived, not only in order to be prepared for what I was about to observe, but also because the Benson Library is one of the few places in the world where such a great amount of resources about Brazil and Latin America are at one's finger tips. Many of the Brazilian publications available at the Benson are not easily accessed in Brazil.

While in São Paulo, my routine consisted of reading the "Folha de São Paulo" newspaper, not only to be informed about world events, but also to search for articles about choro, and look for performances and rodas. Choosing places to see choro was logistically complicated. For example, some of my friends mentioned the "Ó do

Borogodó" bar, but I was hesitant to go there with friends, at least at first, as I was to conduct field-research. Since the city is immense, arriving from point A to point B is not always the easiest process. Even though I did have access to a car, and I am familiar with the city, mapping complicated routes became a regular activity, and essential for any outing. Since the city is dangerous, it is wise to know exactly where one is going before venturing out.

My typical methodology once at performance, was to do the following things, though not necessarily in this order:

- Introduce myself to the musicians, and explain my project.
- Ask for permission to record on Minidisk and/or take photographs.
- Trade contact information.
- Request an extensive interview in the future. If that was not possible, I would ask as many questions as I could on site usually during an intermission.
- Find a location with relatively good acoustics for the best possible recording.
- Observe the people in the audience.
- Take mental or field notes on the physical surroundings.
- Observe the musicians body language.
- Enjoy the music.

In addition to reading the history, the newspaper, and attending performances, I

conducted interviews both in person and via e-mail. I only recorded four extensive interviews, but conducted several shorter interviews on location with notebook in hand, and sometimes simply trusting memory.

Another important step was to acquire a seven-string guitar. This allowed me to begin to understand the technical aspects of the instrument, and to participate in the roda at "Contemporânea Instrumentos Musicais." Although I attended many rodas, I only participated in one roda at Contemporânea because my familiarity with the repertoire was limited, and because playing choro by ear is very challenging, and I was not yet familiar enough with the repertoire, which often included many obscure choros in addition to the choro standards. On average at every performance or roda, I only recognized about four out of twenty-five tunes.

My overall methodology can be described as observational reflexivity. I applied basics of participant observation as I learned them at Swarthmore College's department of Sociology and Anthropology, and The University of Texas at Austin's department of Ethnomusicology. The main ethnographers that guided my methodology in the field were A. Merriam (1964), K. Gourlay (1978), B. Jackson (1987), and Barz & Cooley (1997).

Chapter 7: Rodas, Saraus, and Concerts in São Paulo

Chapter 7 provides my (partial) overview of the paulistano choro scene, and a discussion of its context. During any given week, there are frequently multiple choro events all over the city, and below is just a taste of some of the places where choro occurs, and is influenced above all by what was logistically possible for me, and not by any order of importance or priority. For example, notably absent is any discussion of Villagio Café which is one of the principal venues for choro in São Paulo.

I will describe both rodas and concerts. The word *roda* is typically used to describe an informal gathering where chorões gather to play music together. This word is also used in other musical practices in Brazil such as capoeira and samba. The word can be directly translated as wheel, but in the context of performance is more similar to our use of the words circle, or ring. Concerts can be understood as a presentational practice with a clear line between audience and performer. I attended rodas at a musical instrument store, and the house of a luthier. The concerts took place at bars, cultural centers, and community stages.

Ó do Borogodó, Rua Horácio Lane, 21, Pinheiros, São Paulo

The "Ó," as locals refer to it, is a happening place in Vila Madalena, an old but youthful and hip neighborhood in São Paulo. The Ó do Borogodó features live musical performances every night of the week, and on weekends packs in eighty people, well beyond what U.S. fire marshalls would consider to be safety capacity. It is a relatively

small bar that has enjoyed being the center of a fad among São Paulo's well-educated middle-class youth for live music and particularly choro and samba. Amongst a crowd of predominantly twenty to thirty year olds, there is the occasional middle-ager, accompanied, as well as the occasional teenager in the midst of discovering the paulistano night life.

I was able to go down to the Ó only one night while I was there, but the name came up frequently in conversations with chorões and appears regularly in periodicals and blogs announcing musical venues for the week. The evening I was present, the group performing was tight, and managed to deliver beautiful melodic solos, and impeccable choro accompaniment, despite the frequent chatter amongst the audience, and the mediocre sound system.

Ó do Borogodó represents one of the most informal settings for choro performance in that people are expected to talk, dance, and spill beer as the music is played. Although there is a clear divide between audience and performer, the performers do not sit on a stage, but instead sit in chairs just as everyone else does. The only difference is that they are performing on instruments that are amplified through the bar's mediocre PA system. On occasion, a sixty-year woman with a raspy, but contagious voice grabs a microphone and sings samba to the flawless accompaniment of these fantastic musicians.

Choro in this context is performative, but informal, and the expectations of technical perfection are left aside because of the noise from clinking glasses and chatter. Nonetheless, the performers are professional in their behavior and execution, and are paid

for their services, as they do bring in quite a crowd. The use of choro in this context is performative, the function is entertainment for the audience, and entertainment as well as financial gain for the musicians and business. Broader functions of education, as discussed in chapter 5 are not directly applicable in the Ó do Borogodó context. The concept of racial democracy dwindles in this context, as well, because there is a significant cover charge, and the predominantly Afro-Brazilian working class of São Paulo cannot afford to spend the evening at a place such as the Ó. Despite the predominantly white audience, there is no racial or ethnic profiling at the door. Any and all are welcome as long as they can pay their check.

The chorões who play at the Ó are usually well-known amongst the choro community. The night I attended included seven-string guitarist, Zé Barbeiro, a well respected chorão who appears as the main representative for the seven-string guitar in the documentary "Violões do Brasil" (Taubkin, 2004). Zé Barbeiro is of mixed racial ancestry. The soloist was a Brazilian man of predominantly European descent who played flute, clarinet and saxophone, unfortunately I was unable to understand his name because of the chatter. The cavaquinista was a Brazilian man of predominantly African ancestry named Ildo Silva, and the excellent pandeirista was Roberta Valente, a Brazilian woman of predominantly European descent. This is a racially and gender integrated group, and each musician performs with some of the most respected *regionais* of São Paulo. In the little time I spent with them, it was clear that racial (and gender) democracy in their roda was a reality. However, it is important to note that this racial democracy is in

a greater context of Brazil's shameful distribution of wealth, especially towards Afro-Brazilians, and Indigenous peoples.

Bar Brahma, Avenida São João 677, Centro, São Paulo

Bar Brahma was founded in downtown São Paulo in 1948. In the 1950s and 1960s it was popular amongst musicians, poets, and intellectuals, including samba legends such as Ary Barroso and Adoniran Barbosa, as well as then future president (now former president) Fernando Henrique Cardoso. In the 1970s and 1980s, downtown São Paulo suffered an economic depression, and the area became dangerous, and by 1998, the business folded. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the bar reopened with a retro 1950s look, but with a modern infrastructure (paraphrased translation from www.barbrahma.com.br).

The venue hosts a wide range of musical acts, from jazz, to samba, to choro, and MPB. The regular choro act is led by a young mandolinist by the name of Danilo Brito, who is accompanied by the tight knit group of veterans, featuring seven-string guitarists Clóvis Carvalho Varanda Paulista. Danilo Brito is a virtuoso, and winner of one of Brazil's most prestigious music awards, the Prêmio Visa.

The group is technically precise and highly professionalized. I attended two of their performances, and noticed that their repertoire was similar both times. Although there was some improvisation, the musicians stuck closely to what was evidently a pre-rehearsed script.

Bar Brahma has become a significant tourist attraction in downtown São Paulo for its typical Brazilian food and music, and even includes a Sunday morning tour of downtown for lunch patrons. Despite its catering towards tourists, the majority of costumers were paulistanos when I attended. However, one might argue that since downtown São Paulo was avoided for an extended period of time by middle class locals, they too may be considered, in a sense, tourists to the downtown area.

Although, the uses and functions of choro at Bar Brahma are similar to those at Ó do Borogodó, namely for-profit entertainment, the context is quite different. Ó consists of a significantly younger population, and is a contender in the night club scene of São Paulo. Bar Brahma has a middle-aged patronage, and when showcasing choro, is focusing primarily on lunch-time clientele.

SESC Pompéia, Rua Clélia, 93, Água Branca, São Paulo

The SESCs are community centers that can function as parks, musical and theatre venues, dance halls, health centers, sports facilities, cafeterias and beer halls. SESC is the acronym for "Serviço Social do Comércio" (Social Service for Commerce), and was started on a federal level in 1946 under the Dutra presidency in efforts to ameliorate the quality of life and sense of community amongst employees of the commercial and service sectors (www.sesc.org.br).

SESC Pompéia is just one of thirty different Sescs spread throughout the state of São Paulo, but it is the one that showcases chorões more frequently than the others, often once or twice a month. I was fortunate enough to see the legendary "Época de Ouro"

perform there on the first night I'd arrived in São Paulo for the winter of 2005 on Saturday, May 28th, as well as the quartet "Chorando as Pitangas" about five weeks later on Tuesday, July 5th.

Época de Ouro was originally founded by Jacob do Bandolim in 1964, and their performance featured seven instrumentalists playing acoustic bass, seven-string guitar, six-string guitar, pandeiro, cavaquinho and mandolin. The show carried a tone professionality. This was the only choro performance I attended where all performers wore suits and ties. The musicians were technically flawless and the group was lead by the young Bruno Rian on mandolin. After the concert, some of the audience members came to greet and compliment the musicians. The young mandolin virtuoso reacted humbly to compliments, and asked if the sound was not too "*enjoado*" (nostalgic/nauseating). The group certainly had performed well within the parameters of the choro performance practice, in a controlled environment, but the audience members speaking to him, replied, that the traditional sound is what the audience expected and hoped for.

The other group I saw perform was the São Paulo based quartet "Chorando as Pitangas" featuring Luizinho Sete Cordas on seven-string guitar, Ildo Silva on cavaquinho, Roberta Valente on pandeiro, and Vítor Lopes on harmonica, with a guest appearance from Dudu on flute. Though not as explicitly formal as "Época de Ouro," "Chorando as Pitangas" was equally professional.

Neither of these shows had financial profits as an objective. The "Época de Ouro" concert cost only $5 (equivalent to US$2 at the time), and the "Chorando as Pitangas"

concert was free. In the SESC Pompéia context, choro was performed with clear lines between audience and performers, and choro was functioning on both entertainment and educational levels. Musicians made a point of citing the name of each piece, often described some of the structural and rhythmic characteristics of the music, and occasionally explained the historical background of the tunes.

Both groups showcased virtuosity, and improvisation. Both were firmly conscientious of their sound being interpreted as a preservation of tradition, and both were interracial groups. The audience was also interracial and, as is unique to free or low-cost shows at SESCs, people of different economic backgrounds were present, though the audience was probably predominantly middle-class.

Praça Benedito Calixto

Praça Benedito Calixto is a public plaza in Pinheiros, the same neighborhood as Ó do Borogodó. Since 1987, there has been a weekly Saturday fair at the plaza featuring arts, crafts, food, and music. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the weekly fair is usually swarmed with humanity all day. There is capoeira, sales of art and antiques, and in the middle of the plaza a group of choro regularly performs. Of all the choro performances I attended, this is the one where the lines between audience and performers is most ambiguous. In the previous performance context, the line is very clear; in the following rodas, there is essentially no line between audience and performer, as anyone can pick up an instrument and participate, and there are no microphones or other amplification.

The *regional* that performs at Praça Benedito Calixto usually consists of some elder musicians who have already retired. The group is led by a man named Canário. Younger chorões frequently make guest appearances, and have the opportunity to plug into the PA system. The audience also sometimes participates by dancing, and occasionally playing small percussion instruments, such as *tamborim*. Canário's *regional* has been paid by the organizers of the fair during certain periods. According to the group's guitarist Wilson Sete Cordas, most recently the group has played without pay, however. Many people dance to the familiar choro rhythms at Praça Benedito Calixto. Although many stay for hours as the musicians perform, most simply listen momentarily as they walk to the next stand looking for food, antiques or craft works.

In this context, the audience is mixed racially and socio-economically. Many people at the fair are tourists, but most are locals, simply out enjoying a Saturday afternoon. The context of this roda is relaxed and loose, and although some people participate by tapping on a tamborim or shaking an empty beer can to the rhythm, there is a sense that some the group sitting down near the microphones is the core group of musicians.

Sarau at João Batista's home

João Batista dos Santos started working as a guitar luthier in 1974 for the largest guitar producer of Brazil, Giannini (est. 1900). He is originally from Paraíba, but has been in São Paulo and his shop is in the neighborhood of Vila Nova Alba in São Paulo, less than 100 yards from an immense *favela*. Even his student line of instruments (the

least expensive from his shops) are professional-grade and all solid *jacarandá paulista*[20] bodies. He offers a variety of solid tops, for a range of sounds, and high quality neck and tuning pegs. Most serious choro guitarists, cavaquinistas, and *bandolinista*s in São Paulo, including Luizinho Sete Cordas, Israel and Izaías Bueno de Almeida use João Batista's instruments.

After having searched for a seven-string guitar on Avenida Teodoro Sampaio, an avenue in São Paulo that is the address of dozens of musical instrument retailers, I was concerned that I would not find a guitar that suited my need for a high-quality, solid body guitar. When I first met João Batista I tried out some of his guitars in his luthier's shop, and could not put down a cedar-topped rosewood solid body seven string guitar. After João Batista waited patiently as my brother and I tried out his guitars and asked him questions for nearly an hour, I bought the guitar. It is a wonderful instrument, though it is not timbred. I left my six-string Epiphone classical guitar for João to repair, and when I returned to pick it up, conducted an extensive interview with him discussing choro musicians and the structure of guitars. One of the key points João Batista made about the development of the role of the seven-string guitar is that seven-string guitarists have reached such high degrees of ability that the six-string guitar is slowly losing its place as an essential part of the choro ensemble, because the seven-string guitarists are frequently able to play both roles. In my fieldwork, most groups I saw did include two guitars, although in fact, a few had only one guitar, and it was a seven-string.

[20] *Jacarandá paulista* is a variety of Brazilian rosewood. Connoiseurs all over the world recognize Brazilian rosewood as among the finest quality for guitars.

About two weeks after our second meeting, I was invited to a barbeque at João Batista's house. I happened to be at Luizinho Sete Cordas house conducting an interview, when João Batista called to invite Luizinho. Luizinho told me I was welcome to join as his guest. Fortunately, I ran into João Batista again at a Saturday roda de choro at Contemporânea, where he confirmed the invitation and provided directions to his house.

Being present at João Batista's house that Sunday was a real honor and privilege for me. Among the other guests were Israel and Izaías Bueno de Almeida, the talented brothers that I would see perform again at Cachuera. A pianist, brought along her electronic Yamaha keyboard. Luizinho Sete Cordas's son, a talented young mandolinist, and his *regional* from Campinas made a late appearance. Unfortunately, Luizinho himself did not show. As a guest at this social event, I did not bring my recording equipment, nor my field notes, but did exchange some contact information at the end of the day. The following is reported from memory, and from notes taken after the fact.

I was the third guest to arrive. A young cavaquinho player, and another client/friend of João's had been there chatting comfortably for some time. After about another half hour Izaías arrived with his brother, Israel, and Israel's girlfriend, along with the keyboardist. Izaías had barely stepped foot into João's house when he said, "Vamos tocar?," ("Let's play?"). He already had his *bandolim* out of its case and tuned by the time João's wife arrived with a glass of whiskey for him. The atmosphere was relaxed, the food was delicious, fresh fish and rice dishes, and everyone was in good spirits. Israel and Izaías have been playing together for over fifty years, and their communication was quick and precise. The repertoire choice included the bossa nova standard, "Chega de

Saudade," with Israel's girlfriend as vocalist, with my occasional harmonization. Many musicians argue that "Chega de Saudade" is structurally a choro disguised as a bossa nova because of its harmonic and melodic characteristics. They also played typical choro standards and lesser known ones, but also waltzes, and a beautiful solo guitar piece by Israel.

After everyone had eaten, and was back to the instruments, the younger generation arrived, full of energy and excitement to play with the veterans. The young men put on quite a show, kept up well with the Buenos, and were clearly awe-struck by the Buenos' virtuosity. As the night wound down, and I said my good-byes, I could not have been happier to be alive. I felt that after all the years I spent living in São Paulo, I finally had a community outside of my school friends that I could identify with.

Contemporânea, Rua General Osório 46, Santa Ifigênia, São Paulo

Contemporânea is a musical instrument shop in downtown São Paulo. Contemporânea has been hosting Saturday rodas since the early 1960s, making these gatherings the longest standing roda de choro in all of São Paulo. Chorões of all ages and skill levels come to Contemporânea to listen to and perform choro in the back room for several hours every Sunday. The roda is nationally famous, and often chorões from out of town who are in São Paulo will stop by to contribute to the sound. In this roda, the lines between audience and performance practically disappear. Anyone can pull up a chair and fiddle around on their instrument. The roda at Contemporânea was the only roda in which I participated. Although my familiarity with performing the choro repertoire is still in its

early stages, the veterans and regulars were supportive, encouraging me to sit in and play for as long as I wished.

The roda at Contemporânea is a roda where the music is so strongly in the forefront that concepts such as racial and gender equality can surface. The musicians have no interest beyond the production of music in the choro tradition. Racial, socio-economic, gender, and even generational barriers essentially evaporate into thin air as the musicians perform, improvise, laugh, and help each other get through the music. The roda at Contemporânea presents a possibility of true solidarity amongst people of all different backgrounds, through the common ground of choro. I am not arguing that choro is the only music that has the potential to break down the aforementioned barriers, but it is truly an incredible experience to participate in a roda, where music is the ultimate priority, and socially constructed divides fall to the side. I realize this reads as an idealization and romantization, but the fact remains. Sadly, as soon as one leaves the roda, socio-economic status, and racial inequality reemerge into consciousness (or subconsciousness).

Chapter 8: Seven-string Guitar Chorões in São Paulo

This chapter presents three seven-string guitar chorões currently in São Paulo based on available literature and fieldwork conducted in June, July, and August of 2005.

Contemporarily, the most traditional orchestration for choro performance is that of the *regional*. A typical *regional* consists of a pandeiro (basically a tambourine with a drum heard), a cavaquinho (basically a ukulele), a soloist (usually a flute or mandolin), and two guitars, one six-string, and one seven-string. Perhaps what is most distinctive about the instrumentation of a *regional* in relation to other musical genres is the use of the acoustic seven-string guitar. However, it is not the seven-string guitar that guarantees a choro aesthetic. Instead, it is the mode of playing, the feeling, and the spirit brought to the roda from each musician. Nonetheless, the seven-string guitar that was introduced by Tute in 1920 has become as essential an instrument to choro as the pandeiro itself. The seven-string guitar is a versatile instrument, at times working to embellish a composition using both improvised and pre-composed baixaria (short quick bass lines that accompany the melody in counterpoint, and are often highlighted during a *breque* in which all other instruments rest), at times as a harmonic accompaniment, and more recently as the lead soloist itself.

From *Projeto Violões do Brasil* (Taubkin) we can note that the seven-string guitar is present throughout the entire country of Brazil. It is especially present in the major urban areas of the country.

Most groups today include either an extremely skilled seven-string guitarist who is able to provide contrapuntal embellishment, especially on the low ends, and seamless harmonic accompaniment simultaneously. Occasionally, the seven-string guitarist will even play the role of soloist, while other instruments cover the harmonic accompaniment, or the groups have another harmonic accompanist, such as a cavaquinho or a second guitarist, while the seven-string guitar provides baixaria (low-end counterpoint).

The Brazilian seven-string guitar is essentially the same as a classical six-string guitar, but with a slightly wider neck to accommodate an additional C-string below the low E, providing four more half tones which are used primarily for baixaria, or quick melodic lines in the lower register of the instruments as both fundamental counterpoint, and improvisational embellishment. The instrument can also be used as one might use a more common six-string guitar, for harmonic accompaniment or by the group's lead soloist.

Israel Bueno de Almeida (b. November 1st, 1943, São Paulo, SP)

Israel spent most of his career working as a bank employee, and currently works as a copy editor at the sheet music archive for São Paulo's "Teatro Municipal" (Municipal Theatre), which is one of the most important art music archives in Brazil.

In his childhood, Israel's first instrument was the cavaquinho, with which he learned choro alongside his brother, Izaías. With the emergence of bossa nova in 1958, Israel picked up the guitar. Israel played bossa nova throughout the sixties. He played in several groups experimenting with a variety of genres, but eventually moved back to

choro, the music that he claims is "in his blood," joining the famous choro ensemble "Conjunto Atlântico" from 1960–1968. Israel and Izaías have always been open to experimenting and expanding the choro repertoire. In the 1970s, they even recorded an LP with Beatles songs performed in a choro style, featuring choro improvisation, and instrumentation. Israel finally switched to the seven-string guitar in 1974 or 1975.[21]

In our the interview, Israel recognized that during the military dictatorship (starting in 1964), choro experienced a resurgence in popularity because it is a predominantly instrumental genre. While protest music from artists such as Chico Buarque, Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil resulted in exile, choro musicians "could not offend the authorities." Because of this ressurgence during the nationalistic dictatorship, many scholars have associated choro with Brazilian nationalism. Israel, however, told me that he believes choro has no political ideology or commitment.

Israel now works closely with his brother, Izaías, and is one of two seven-string guitarists in the group, "Izaías e seus Chorões." Edmílson Capelupi is the second seven-string guitarist in the group, and is a respected musician and music scholar, having edited dozens of Pixinguinha's choros for publication in *O Melhor de Pixinguinha*, a book of sheet music. I was fortunate enough to catch "Izaías e seus Chorões" at Cachuera (a cultural center in Perdizes, São Paulo) on July 30, 2005. Their performance was the most musically sophisticated concert I witnessed in the choro performance style during my fieldwork in June–August 2005. "Izaías e seus Chorões" simultaneously maintain a strong tie to the choro style of performance in terms of instrumentation, repertoire and

[21] He was unable to pinpoint the year during our interview.

phrasing, yet, they are also innovative in their improvisation, and arrangements, particularly in the work of the guitars. Edmílson and Israel, both play seven-string guitars, both improvise constantly, yet coordinate baixaria phrases in parallel thirds of great beauty. The group also included Haroldo Capelupi (Edmílson's brother) on cavaquinho, and Zequinha on pandeiro. Izaías himself is a virtuoso on the mandolin, and many consider him to be the most talented living chorão soloist of São Paulo.

The performance was formal, and audience members were asked not to dance before the concert began. The request was justified as being within the tradition of choro. I was surprised because, every other choro performance I'd attended had included at least some dancing in the audience. In my interview with Israel, he explained that the request for no dancing had not been for the sake of the musicians, implying that dancing is perfectly acceptable during choro performance.

Luizinho Sete Cordas (Luís Araújo Amorim, b. October 31st, 1946, Marília, SP)

Luizinho Sete Cordas is recognized by many chorões as the heir to Dino Sete Cordas's throne of the seven string baixarias. To see Luizinho perform is to witness a true force of human creativity. Luizinho has performed with many famous Brazilian musicians, and is usually requested to accompany visiting popular music celebrities from out of the state of São Paulo, when they come to São Paulo to perform shows, or to record.

Luizinho and his family live in a humble home in the neighborhood of Largo do Taboão in São Paulo. Perhaps the most striking thing when arriving at his house is the

large number of small dogs that come to greet visitors. Luizinho was born in Marilee, a small town in the interior of São Paulo, but his family moved to Santos when he was very young, and that is where he was raised.

He finally moved to São Paulo in 1980. Luizinho is one of the few chorões in São Paulo who has made a career strictly as a musician. Most chorões hold other jobs and play music in spare time, or for extra cash on weekends. Luizinho has been playing professionally for over twenty-five years. In addition to appearing in numerous concerts and TV shows, Luizinho also teaches the seven-string guitar from his home.

Luizinho and his family were very welcoming for my interview. Most of the interview was spent discussing the declining status of choro in contemporary São Paulo. Luizinho was critical of mass media, including radio and television, and the "low-quality" of the music that is currently popular throughout Brazil. As is common practice with any seven-string guitarist, Luizinho improvises, but he also frequently reads music from staff paper during performance. If Luizinho is not the first, he is one of the first seven-string guitarists to write down his entire part on staff paper. He has file cabinets full of transcribed materials for the seven-string guitar, and has hopes of eventually publishing a book. Two seven-string choro guitarists have already published seven-string guitar methods, Luiz Otávio Braga (see chapter 2), and Marco Antonio Bertaglia (see below).

Marco Antonio Bertaglia (b. November 17th, 1962, São Paulo, SP)

Marco Bertaglia studied music on guitar starting at age 12. In the mid-1980s, Bertaglia picked up the seven-string guitar. He always had a diverse repertoire ranging from popular to classical. Bertaglia started his own music school in 1987, when he also joined the respected "*Regional* do Evandro," a traditional choro group from São Paulo, performing on the seven-string guitar. In 1997, he joined "Grupo Nosso Choro," an instrumental quintet. He continues to teach, record, and perform with the aforementioned groups, as well as solo (Bertaglia, 2002).

Bertaglia is the author of the first instructional book published specifically for seven-string guitar. The first edition was released in September, 1999. The book includes two cds, and the book is divided into seven parts–scales, how to set up chords, bass exercises, bass cadences, chord illustrations, listening, and musical pieces with scores and tablatures.

The book is designed to be useful to any level of guitar player who is unfamiliar with the seven-string guitar. On page 11, there is a particularly revealing illustration to show that the book can be used by even the most inexperienced novice. The illustration is of the fret board of the guitar, with the letter names produced by each string while pressing each fret. Page 12 is dedicated to the same concept, but this time illustrated with letters, tablature and a musical staff. Page 12 also includes a description of rhythmic values, such as whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, etc... as well as whole rests, half rests, etc... There is even a definition of tablature. Pages 11–14 essentially describe how to read the music printed in the book. It is truly elementary, but useful if it is the first time a student is picking up a guitar, or if the student cannot read any type of music, scored or

tab. Pages 15–21 are dedicated to scales, with fingering positions, tab and score, for every key represented by key signature and staff. Pages 22–37 are where the book becomes particularly useful to a seven-string guitarist. It is in this section where Bertaglia explores arpeggios of various different chords. The reason this is so important is that one of the most common ways to construct the baixaria for a choro is to arpeggiate chords throughout the piece. While Bertaglia does use a variety of rhythmic cells in the bass exercises, the bulk of the book is spent on the fairly banal scales, and most basic theory.

It is surprising that there is literally no discussion of syncopation, swing, or individual musicality throughout the entire publication. Bertaglia's book is a dry, but accurate and useful representation of the fundamentals of the seven-string guitar. Bertaglia makes no mention whatsoever of the improvisation that is so highly regarded, and essential to the seven-string guitarist.

Nonetheless, it is an important publication because Bertaglia's *O Violão de 7 Cordas* can be used as a practical guide, and has the potential to teach a great deal about the instrument to the guitarist who does not have direct access to a teacher.

The Water, Conclusions

Choro is an excellent form for the teaching and learning of music, and ethnomusicology because of its healthy synthesis of sound structure, score, improvisational technique, aesthetics, musicality, history and possibility for innovation. This study serves as an introduction to the history and current state of choro in São Paulo, and the role of the seven-string guitar. The breadth and depth of material yet to be explored goes far beyond.

The fluidity between art and popular, improvisational and written, is what distinguishes choro from other Brazilian and World Musics. Choro is an inspiration to art music composers such as Radamés Gnattalli and Heitor Villa-Lobos, yet it travels all the way to the spring of contemporary Brazilian popular music. Similarly popular musicians, such as Roberta Sá and Zé Renato continue to draw inspiration from choro, performing and recording with talented choro ensembles, such as "Trio Madeira Brasil" to provide accompaniment to their commercially successful albums.

Luizinho Sete Cordas, Luiz Otávio Braga and Israel Bueno de Almeida bridge improvisational-based Brazilian popular music to the written tradition of Brazilian erudite (art) music. All play choro, which is typically considered a popular music, yet each has incorporated different elements of erudite music into their choro practice. Luizinho Sete Cordas transcribes his guitar parts to staff paper, and performs reading off the score. Luiz Otávio Braga revolutionized the seven-string guitar by switching to nylon strings as is

used in the classical concert guitar tradition. Israel Bueno de Almeida works as a score copy editor for São Paulo's Municipal Theatre.

Choro has come to be a cultural representative of Brazil because of its musical quality and early influence on samba, but also because of its ability to transcend the social, political, economic, and racial barriers that Brazilian confront on a daily basis.

Rodas de choro also can be interpreted to represent a physical setting for the enactment of the "racial democracy." The concept of a racial democracy in Brazil is difficult to swallow because the country has only recently been democratized, having been under a military dictatorship from 1964–1985. Further, according to Edward E. Telles, Afro-Brazilians and Brazilians of mixed ethnicities continue to earn little more than 40% of what Brazilians of European descent earn on average (Hanchard, 86). This embarrassingly uneven distribution of wealth, and recent political democratization makes racial democracy little more than a myth. Yet, the (often subtly or even imperceptibly) hostile racial environment in Brazil cannot impede the roda de choro from bringing music and solidarity to life, even for fleeting periods of time.

Another concern is the gender gap in choro. Authors such as Henrique Cazes have reinforced stereotypes of Brazilian women in the kitchen, although their intentions may be to encourage more women to participate as choro musicians. In São Paulo, all-female groups, such as Balaio de Gato, and individual women such as Roberta Valente participating in rodas, are increasingly common, and this should not be a surprise in a performance practice that owes much of its early creativity to an Afro-Brazilian woman, Chiquinha Gonzaga.

Although there is much disagreement amongst purists such as José Ramos Tinhorão and Jacob do Bandolim, and modernizers such as Lindolpho Gaya and Israel Bueno de Almeida, none can deny that choro is a steady balance between tradition and innovation. Starting with earliest chorão, Antonio da Silva Callado, and into the present day, choro incorporated older music traditions, as well as new practices, the written music on staff paper, as well as improvisation. I think that this equilibrium between tradition and innovation is the water that composes choro. It is not the pandeiro, cavaquinho, guitar instrumentation, or the rondo form or common time that makes choro. It is an awareness of tradition and the ability to bring tradition to life through new and creative sound.

Most of the musicians discussed in this work play choro because they love the music, and do not for any major financial gain or for nationalistic political purposes. There are certainly countless musicians whose voices are not represented in these pages. The brief ethnography in the third part of this work serves as an estuary that presents the reader to the ocean of possibilities of contemporary choro in São Paulo.

Choro has proven to be a valuable resource from which to learn about São Paulo's music, history, culture, and race relations. Anyone who ventures into the universe of choro will encounter some of the questions of identity, and musical practice presented in this report, such as the history and development of choro, race relations in the roda, and the fluid nature of choro as both an aural and written tradition. Choro is not by any means the only representative music of São Paulo or Brazil. It is not even strictly Brazilian, but

it does provide a window into Brazil's past, present, and future, as chorões all around Brazil construct a roda ethic and musical practice on a daily basis.

Glossary

Baixaria: accompanying counterpoint on the low end of the seven-string guitar, usually in rapid descending tonal scales, sometimes highlighted with rests from the other instruments.

Bandolim: mandolin, most often the lead solo instrument, usually to execute the main melody of a piece, and for improvisation, but also used as an accompanying instrument or for counterpoint occasionally.

Bandolinista: mandolinist.

Berimbau: a monochordal instrument used in the Brazilian martial art/dance form, capoeira.

Breque: Break. A musical rest, often at the climax of a piece used in choro and samba.

Cavaco: a Brazilian steel-string ukulele, used mostly as a high-end accompanying instrument providing harmonic and rhythmic support, though sometimes used as the lead solo instrument. Also frequently used in samba and pagode. The four strings are usually tuned D-g-b-d, although alternative tunings are often used.

Cavaquinho: the diminutive for cavaco. Although there are two standard sizes, one larger (cavaco) and one smaller (cavaquinho), the terms are often used interchangeably.

Cavaquinista: one who plays the cavaco or cavaquinho.

Chorão: a musician whose main musical performance practice is choro.

Choro: a late nineteenth century style of acoustic music that is usually instrumental, based on a written score, but which incorporates improvisation. A choro piece has two or three parts, and one or two modulations, and is most often performed in 2/4 time, although some chorões incorporate waltzes into their repertoire on occasion. Typical instrumentation includes one pandeiro, one cavaquinho, one six-string guitar, one seven-string guitar, and two of the following instruments alternating between lead soloist and counterpoint: mandolin, clarinet, flute, saxophone or harmonica.

Choro-canção: a song with choro characteristics, such as form, instrumentation, and baixaria, but with the addition of sung lyrics.

Chorões: plural of chorão; choro musicians.

Cozinha: kitchen, used in reference to the rhythmic and harmonic section of a choro or samba grou In choro this includes the pandeiro, cavaquinho and guitars.

Favela: Brazilian urban shanty-town.

Flauta: flute, most often used as the lead soloist, most often the lead solo instrument, usually to execute the main melody of a piece, and for improvisation, sometimes used for counterpoint.

Gaita: harmonica, most often used as the lead soloist, most often the lead solo instrument, usually to execute the main melody of a piece, and for improvisation, sometimes used for counterpoint. Also used in Brazilian rock'n'roll.

MPB: acronym for Música Popular Brasileira. MPB is an umbrella term used to include various popular music styles of Brazil, and is regarded with a certain degree of prestige. In most hip circles, MPB represents the best of Brazil's music and culture, and many extraordinarily popular forms of music such as Rock Nacional, Funk, Hip-Hop, Brega, Pagode, Sertaneja, are usually not considered to fall under the MPB category. On the other hand, what is considered MPB is hard to define, but can be understood best perhaps as hybrid radio-friendly studio genres with explicit references to Brazilian musical traits, especially samba rhythm (although Samba School Carnaval music is not typically conceived of as MPB, but instead as a whole separate form).

Pagode: a radio-friendly commercial form of samba with pop music aspirations.

Pandeirista: one who plays the pandeiro.

Pandeiro: a tambourine with a drumhead. Typically the only percussion instrument used in choro, provides a steady 2/4 accompaniment, often with improvised ornamental malandragem.

Pau e corda: literally "stick and string," an expression used to describe ensembles that used flute, cavaquinho and guitar, the original formation of the choro ensemble derived from modinha groups. See *terno*.

Paulista: of the state of São Paulo.

Paulistana/o: of the city of São Paulo.

Pauta: the staff; the score; sheet music.

Regional: originally used to describe local groups that performed live on radio stations to provide accompaniment and sound filler, which were frequently comprised of chorões, the term is still used to describe a choro ensemble.

Roda: literally means wheel. Usually an informal gathering of chorões loosely assembled in a circle or semi-circle for playing, improvising, and teaching music. “Roda” is also used to describe capoeira and samba gatherings.

Roda de choro: Usually an informal gathering of chorões loosely assembled in a circle or semi-circle for playing, improvising, and teaching music.

Samba: the main musical expression of Brazil, typically in 2/4 time, with several verses and a refrain, used for the highly organized and massive Carnaval competitions, as well as for informal block parties.

Sambista: a musician who plays samba.

Sarau: an informal gathering of choro musicians, a site where the roda is formed.

Sete cordas: short for “violão de sete cordas” (seven-string guitar or seven-string guitarist).

Tamborim: a small single headed drum used in samba schools, typically with a diameter of 4 inches, and short metallic body, that is struck with nylon or wooden sticks, usually in syncopated and quick rhythms.

Terno: the original modinha ensemble and seed for the first choro groups, the terno was a trio of flute, guitar and cavaquinho. This type of ensemble was also called pau e corda.

Violão: guitar, arguably the main instrument of Brazil. Choro often uses both one six-string and one seven-string guitar. The six-string typically provides harmonic accompaniment, while the seven-string usually executes low-end counterpoint baixarias.

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Vita

Daniel Sherwood Sotelino was born in São Paulo, Brazil on March 30, 1979, the son of Karen Catherine Sherwood Sotelino and Fernando Barreira Sotelino. After completing his work at Escola Graduada in São Paulo, Brazil, in 1997, he entered Swarthmore College in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, where he received the degree of Bachelor of Arts and completed Swarthmore College's secondary school certification in 2001. During 2002 he was employed as an administrative assistant at the Instituto Moreira Salles in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In July 2003, he married his wife, Mariah Peelle Sotelino. In August of 2003 he enrolled at the Graduate School of The University of Texas at Austin where he worked as a Teaching Assistant and Graduate Research Assistant in the School of Music (2004–2005), and as an Assistant Instructor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese (2004).